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THE PIRATE'S DAUGHTER.

Bolidar the Sea King's Crime---A Brave American and His Love---Life and Mystery in the West Indies.

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CHAPTER I.
THE SHIPWRECK.

The good ship Eleanor of Boston, bound to San Juan de Porto Rico, had entered West Indian waters in the autumn of 1824. An observation had been taken at noon, and the reckoning therefrom showed the ship's position to be in latitude twenty degrees and fifty-five minutes north, and longitude seventy-nine degrees and fifty-five minutes west. It was now late in the afternoon, and the wind, which had been quite steady from the southwest during the day, was dying away, while the clear brightness of the sky was dimmed by a shadowy gloom that came from no special direction, but which seemed to envelop them.

Luke Ravenwood, commander of the ship, was a young fellow, only 26 years of age, but an experienced seaman. His father had been a sea captain, and he learned the ways under him, making himself so proficient that at nineteen he was placed in command of a merchant vessel making regular trips between Boston and Brazil. Luke was a fine-looking young man—handsome, tall, broad shouldered, with dark brown eyes and hair. There was not only an ample reservoir of physical strength in his swelling bosom and firm-set limbs, but the proud lifting of his full brow, and the fire of those keen eyes, spoke of an inner strength which was unconquerable.

Luke had never known a mother's love, who died before he was old enough to be conscious of having died when he was still an infant, and he was reared and educated by a maiden aunt to the age of fifteen, when he went with his father to sea. The father was appointed to the navy three years before our story opens and was killed in an engagement with some of the West India Buccaneers.

This cast a gloom over the heart of the young seaman, but two years later came another blow that almost crushed out his life and took from him his last hope of earthly happiness. One of the merchants owning the ship of which he was master, was Mr. Samuel Morris of Boston. Mr. Morris had an invalid wife and one daughter, Eleanor, who was then about 18 years of age. Luke Ravenwood had known Eleanor since she was a little girl and had watched her grow to the most beautiful woman he had ever known, with marked interest. This interest grew into love and his love was returned.

The parents did not object to the attentions and they were betrothed, and the day for the wedding fixed. Mr. Morris had some interests in England, and the young captain was sent there with a merchantman. In the meantime Eleanor's mother was in ill health, and her physicians advised her to seek a milder climate than Massachusetts for the winter, and with Mr. Morris's daughter she started for Kingston, Jamaica, aboard another West Indiaman which belonged to her husband's fleet.

The vessel containing the wife and daughter touched at Charleston and Savannah, then she was spoken in West India waters by a homeward bound ship, and never seen or heard of after. The fate of the vessel, crew, and passengers was not known. Whether she had gone down in one of those awful West India hurricanes, or had been captured by some of the ferocious pirates which the fleet of Commodore Porter had not been able to exterminate, was not known.

Every effort possible was made to learn their fate, but in vain. The grief of the husband and father was no more frantic than that of the lover. From the hour of his return from Europe, and learning that Eleanor was lost to him, he was a changed man. He still plied his trade, and was at his own request, assigned to the West Indies. The vessel he commanded was named the Eleanor, for the lost one, and the figure and face of the beautiful girl was carved on the bow.

"Do you speak English?"

On the afternoon in question, Captain Luke Ravenwood stood by the taffrail, gazing off upon the horizon to the eastward, occasionally raising his hand above his head to feel if any wind was stirring, and more often casting his eye aloft to see how the canvas hung. While thus engaged, his first mate, Mr. Briggs, approached him and asked:

"What d'ye think of this, Captain?"

"I believe we'll have a storm, sir," the captain returned, sweeping the horizon with his eyes, "and when it does come, Lem, it will be in earnest. None of your ocean puffs with nothing to hatch wind from, but we'll have it right fresh from the West India skies where they know how to make things blow."

"I certainly agree with you, Captain," the mate answered. "I hope it won't be too hard, and not last long."

"You can't hope so more than I," said the captain, "for I dread a storm just here."

"We've got a good stout ship, and yet we're hampered for sea room. There are so many infernal keys and islands not on the chart, and big gray rocks sticking their heads up from the sea, that we are liable to be on breakers at any time before we know it."

There is something in the atmosphere of an impending storm at sea, which a sailor can readily feel; and, though the crew of the Eleanor may not have felt so deeply and significantly as the captain, yet every man was certain that a storm was near. Captain Ravenwood watched the sea and sky as the hours wore on. The sun, was setting in a thick bank of haze, giving to the whole western horizon a dull, bloody hue, with here and there spots of a darker tinge, like openings through a fiery cloud, looking upon a fearful blackness behind.

The haze and the oppressive stillness continued to increase until the men were actually panting for breath.

One old sailor remarked that it seemed as if when the sun went down it set the ocean on fire, and the smoke was settling about them.

At 8 o'clock the first watch was set and still the same awful calm prevailed over the scene. "Don't go below," said the captain, as the men of the last dog watch left their stations, "you had better batten down the hatches now while there is nothing else to do, for you may be sure there will be work enough after awhile to keep you all busy."

The hatches were secured with thick tarpaulins, and the men not engaged gathered about the wheel.

All sails save enough to work the ship were reefed, and the mainstay lowered to the deck, where it was thought it would be safer. Ten o'clock came and still not a breath of wind. The ship lay upon the water like a dead thing, with the ropes and blocks and sails rattling and flapping as she was swayed to and fro by the lazy swells of the sea, and she bowed the compass more than once with her tiller, forking the ropes upon the barrel of the wheel.

The captain and his mate had been standing at the taffrail a long time in silence. At last the young master spoke in a low, pathetic voice:

"Lem, we are about where the ill-fated Ocean Star, on which Eleanor and her mother were, was last sighted."

"Yes, Captain; I was just thinking of it. Do you suppose they went down, or—"

"Or were they murdered by the pirates?"

"Yes."

"Heaven knows, I would give worlds to know their fate. These seas are still the rendezvous for those fiends in human form."

In those days merchant ships that went unconvoyed to the West Indies, usually carried a full crew and arms. Many even had heavy guns aboard, so that they could either be a war vessel or honest merchantmen. The Eleanor had a crew of twenty-four men in addition to captain and two mates, making twenty-seven in all, and had four six and one nine-pounder on board, and was prepared to give any free rovers a hard fight should they molest her.

Though no clouds had risen the dense haze had completely obscured the stars, and in those tropical regions the night came on quickly. The blackness of Erebus, save where the phosphorescence flashed came from the sea, was over the face of the deep. The lantern hanging on the binnacle gave out a ghostly, uncertain light, which seemed to fill the men with superstitious dread.

Hark! It was a puff of wind, and the air filled with flying spray. Then a low, dull roar, and the masts creaked and bent, the ship was down on her beam ends and the raging waves washed the decks. The voice of the captain, now heard distinctly and calmly above the raging storm, seemed to encourage his men.

If Luke Ravenwood had seemed brave, it was all gone as soon as they had to do battle with the storm fiend. He was the coolest man aboard, and with what sail they dared carry, sold before the wind, and fly from those great rolling seas which were continually chasing them in the wake.

For two hours the storm had raged. It was midnight now, and there was no sign of it abating. The first mate approached the captain and asked:

"Captain, do you know where we are?"

"I can only surmise from the noon calculation."

filled with superstitious awe before the storm came, it was all gone as soon as they were menaced by real danger. The seamen who trembled at the thunder of the storm king's voice, became calm when the saturing tones of the young captain fell upon their ears.

The ship was already prepared when the storm struck, and there was nothing to do but wear ship, and with what sail they dared carry, sold before the wind, and fly

"Well, aren't we short of sea room?"

"Hush—in God's name! We are nearing the ship much as she will stand, but the danger—you know as well as I."

Suddenly some one in the forecastle cried: "A light! A light!"

"Where away?"

"Three points to the lee'ard."

All could see the flare of a great light gleaming up out of the darkness.

"What do you think of it, Briggs?" the captain asked coolly.

"It must be a light house."

"Yes, I know of no light house in this latitude; we are in the vicinity of some of the unlabelled islands, are we not?"

"I thought we were."

"Then it cannot be a light house. It must be a beacon fire to guide ships to some safe port. At any rate I shall order the helmsman headed for the light. How far off should you judge that light to be?"

"I should say from four to five miles; perhaps more," returned Briggs.

"So I think," added the captain. Casting his eyes about the horizon he thought it was lighting up and the storm abating.

"I ought so," responded the mate. "Now if it would only—"

He was interrupted by a cry from the bows which thrilled every soul with horror:

"Breakers! Breakers!"

Captain Ravenwood leaped forward and in a very few moments he was satisfied that it was no false warning; for the awful roar of breaking seas and the phosphoric coat of foam of dashing waters made the fact too certain. As quickly as possible the top sail was taken in and the anchors cut loose. The ponderous grapplings plunged into the hissing sea and the iron cables were spun through the hawse-holes like lightning. Snap, went the starboard chain, and in a moment more a shock was felt as the larboard anchor found bottom. But it could not hold. The cables parted as though it had been a cord of rotten twine, and the ship driven shoreward.

"In heaven's name!" gasped Briggs, "what does this mean? The light is still burning as brightly as ever—burning at least a league away—yet there we are, the rocks directly under our bows! What can it mean?"

Luke Ravenwood did not answer; but an old weather-beaten sailor, who stood at the wheel, responded:

"It's a false beacon made by some o' the pirates. It ain't no use for us to fire a gun o' distress, sir. That light was put there to lure us to death."

"Breakers! Rocks! On the starboard bow! No! Larboard—Port!"

But no mortal power could save them. The ship struck with a crash, plunging deep into the raging foam. Then from out the darkness and much nearer than the light, there came high above the thunder and roar of breakers exultant shouts of fiends rejoicing in their ruin.

The mask was so great the lanterns were knocked down and they were in total darkness. Something struck the captain, and he fell just as the hull of his beautiful ship was crushed to pieces, and the broken wreck washed ashore.

CHAPTER II.

A MYSTERIOUS FRIEND.

Often it is, when most utterly helpless, we are protected seemingly by Providence, or guardian angels.

Luke Ravenwood was stunned, helpless, and only partially extricated from the ruins of a falling beam, and tumbled forward into the long boat, that had been stored with the ship's stores thus far. The boat was shaken from its davits, lifted on the waves and borne on the foaming crest of a wave to the rocky beach.

He was just dimly conscious of lying helpless in the bottom and of clinging with a death grip to the seats, and of awkwardly sliding, low, and bounding forward at the speed of a race horse, then of a loud crash. All was then blank.

When he regained consciousness there was a dull pain in his head and left shoulder. He found the sun shining directly in his face, and he was jammed between two great masses of rock and his position was very irksome.

He tried to rise but could not at first for he was very weak. He now remembered the wreck of the ship and very naturally supposed that he had been thrown ashore, and perhaps had sustained injuries that would prevent his rising. He strove to cry out but was unable to make any answer. Then he lay for a long time, the hot sun beaming down on his unprotected face.

After awhile he made another effort to rise and succeeded in getting out from between the stones. He discovered that the boat had been driven between the rocks where it stuck fast and he was safe. No doubt the boat had saved his life, for had he not been there he would have been crushed to a jelly.

After a little he found no bones broken, but many severe bruises, and staggered to his feet.

He walked a short distance from the rocks and sat under the shade of a tall cliff of stone, and began to scan the ocean. He saw pieces and bits of the wreck and the bodies of two of his brave crew, but no one had been spared. He was alone on a land of which he knew nothing.

A fatherless one over him and he leaned against the rock only half conscious. He heard the sound of voices in the distance but was too feeble to call to them. He watched a few moments and saw four or five men walking down by the beach. They were evidently ferocious looking beings. They were white and one black.

Two carried guns in their hands and all were noisily engaged in their bets. Disagreeable companions as they might prove, Luke thought them better than none, and made frantic efforts to attract their attention. They however, passed out of his sight.

Then he rose to his hands and knees and crawled to a cocoanut tree and lay in the shade of it. He found a fresh nut that had just been taken from the tree, or perhaps had been blown off by the storm the night before.

He cracked it between two stones and drank the milk, which he found sweet, cool and refreshing. It seemed to invigorate and strengthen him. He then proceeded to make a breakfast on the meat, and found his strength was rapidly returning.

The effects of the nervous shock having passed away, he was able to walk. He went up into the grove where he found more cocoanuts and drank all the milk and ate all of the fruit he wanted. Being considerably stronger he went down to the beach which was strewn with barrels and casks and all manner of pieces of wreck. His heart was saddened by an occasional sight of one of his beloved crew.

"I am all that is left," he said.

Chancing to look around he saw four men coming toward him. They had discovered him, and consequently there was no time to escape. He sank down on the sand.

They boiled him and came hurriedly forward.

"Que son vos, usted?" called a great burly Spaniard.

Luke understood very little Spanish, and told him so.

"Do you speak English?" asked another of the group, a ruffian fully as repulsive as the man who had first addressed him.

"Yes, sir."

"Then who are you?"

"An American," he answered.

"Was that your ship that went to pieces on the rocks last night?"

"It was," he answered.

"Were you the captain?"

"I was."

"What was it loaded with?"

"Staves, flour and pork."

The ruffians conversed a moment, gathered in a group and held a whispered consultation in Spanish. Luke listened.

"Do you think money was aboard?"

Captain Ravenwood could no longer doubt the character of the men. His anxiety in regard to the money and treasure betrayed his secret. Luke knew that there were ten thousand dollars on board to purchase sugar, but that it no doubt all was stored at the bottom.

"You come with us," said the big burly fellow who spoke English. The men were peculiar caps on their heads, their garb was of the coarsest material, and they were armed with cutlasses and pistols. At the first glance he was convinced that these were pirates, but to refuse their command would be folly. He was weak, and helpless, and resistance would be of the question, so he accompanied them.

They went to the other side and two walked behind him. They conversed in Spanish, of which Luke knew but little more than a few; they were discussing the plausibility of dispatching him at once, but the big ruffian who spoke English was that the matter should be decided until they reached Belize. He shuddered at the thought that Beldar was one of the most notorious of all the pirates. They were commanded by Simon Alligator. Alligator had attacked when he was killed and his vessel burned. He had also committed infamous crew that had slain his father.

They went down a little cove and away two boats lay with their heads cleft in twain by cutlasses, indicating that they had been purposely wrecked by the captain, these merciless wretches.

"God in heaven, have mercy on me!" he mentally ejaculated, as he was hurried over the stony beach.

He saw the main mast of the hull of his own gallant ship wedged between two great rocks, the sea grow high in the air. As he gazed he saw the image of his loved Eleanor engraved on the mast, newly carved. With tears gathering in his eyes, he murmured:

"Oh, Eleanor! Lost Eleanor! I will soon be with you!"

Around a jutting headland they came upon three long boats drawn up on the beach. Several men were there or standing on the shore. They had brought away many articles from the wreck, which lay on the ground. A fourth boat with men, axes, saws and mules, was coming around the headland and was landlocked and so completely screened by dense mangroves that it was not seen by Luke's escort, that there was little danger of it being seen.

The new arrival was a boat that had come with a crew and tools to break up the wreck without the knowledge of the others two miles away from the top of a tall cliff could be seen a dense forest of mangroves standing up lustily into the sky, the remnant of the false beacon which had lured the gallant Eleanor to her fate.

"Come be this boat, you will go be our prisoner," said the ruffian who spoke English.

Captain Ravenwood submissively took his seat in the stern and was soon skimming over the water as rapidly as the stalwart oars could carry them up into the bay. He saw at once they had rounded a point, and through the trees and vines saw a magnificent harbor surrounded by hills, mountains and forests. In the harbor lay at anchor a large three-masted schooner, while on the shore there was a sort of temporary village made of bamboo huts and tents.

Back of the town was the forest of mangroves and clustering vines too dense for the eye to penetrate.

The captain was taken ashore to a hut built just at the water's edge, and those rude caverns for which the West India islands are famous.

In the hut, a tall, dark-skinned man with black whiskers and eyes. His face was expressive of cruelty and low, base propensities. He was embittered against the world and seeking revenge in a most terrible manner.

"Who have ye there?" he demanded in English.

"It's the master of the ship that was wrecked last night," answered Luke.

"Aha! Well, sir," addressing Luke, "what be your name?"

"Luke Ravenwood."

"And your ship?"

"The Eleanor, bound to Porto Rico, sir."

"I care nothing for your cargo. D'ye you have money aboard?"

"There was about twenty thousan, dollars in gold to buy sugar."

"Do you think it can be recovered?"

"I doubt if it can from the position of the wreck."

After asking him a few more questions, he commanded them to take him to the cave.

"Stay here, Diego, the remainder go with him." Then when the others were gone the pirate chief, who styled himself the Sea King, asked:

"Diego, why did you not kill that fellow?"

"We supposed you wanted him alive, to tell of the gold."

"He has enlighted us but little. Knowing the amount will do us no good if we can't get it; you should have left him there with the others. Remember our motto is that the dead tell no tales."

"What shall we do with him?"

"Take him to the cave, blow out his brains, carry him through to the other outlet and throw him into the sea."

The pirate bowed and rejoined his companions with the message. With treacherous smiles the way, they were hurrying along through the woods, and soon emerged into the unseen stony way through the mangroves. After they had gone a short distance they came to a halt, and one of the men said: "This is far enough."

He drew a pistol and stepped in front of the prisoner.

"What are you going to do?" asked Luke.

"I am ordered to blow your brains out, so you'd just as well shut your eyes and submit."

In a frantic effort he tore himself loose from the two who held him. Knocked a third down and overturned the fourth, who he stumbled over a pile of stones and fell, just as the pistol was discharged over his head.

"Now we have him!" roared one of the buccaneers, and in a moment he was over the youth with uplifted cutlass.

"Hold!" cried a sharp voice and the cutlass descended with a terrific blade with such force as to emit a shower of sparks.

Luke Ravenwood, who expected to die as a pirate, had suddenly appeared from the cave, and had struck down the young captain's life. Luke Ravenwood saw him by the light of the torch carried by the ruffians. He was a handsome boy with long silken curls almost to his shoulders and bold, dark eyes.

CHAPTER III.

A WONDERFUL DISCOVERY.

"Bérti!" gasped the pirate whose blow had been struck.

"Diego, you shall not harm him!"

"But he is our prisoner."

"I care not for the orders of Boildar—this man's life shall be spared!"

Diego turned upon his companions who had recovered about his self:

"I will obey the orders of the chief, or will you let this boy rule you?"

"Back, all!" commanded the youth, drawing a pistol from his belt and cocking it. "By Cain the sacrificer I'll make a corpse of the man who dares harm his friend."

"Bérti, how shall we report this to our chief?"

"Tell him I am responsible for this man. I will take him to my chamber and there he will be safe. If you like, you may not send two to guard us both. But, by my father's life, I'll shoot!"

It was evident to Captain Ravenwood that the youth was powerful with the pirates, with the pirates. He was next to the chief in authority, if not his superior. At any rate he resolved to use it.

A hurried consultation was held in Spanish and Arabic, of which Luke knew evidently a compromise, was proposed to the youth.

But he shook his head. He would not trust them. He was the rightful chief, on occasion, they decided that the prisoner might be brought before him, and the chief be consulted, and they would report the matter to the chief.

"Be it so," said the bold, frank, open face of the youth, and could not but admire the boy, for he was a handsome child, or nineteen years of age, and his features were those of a perfect Apollo. While his form was lithe and supple, his shoulders broad and muscular, and his motions were denoted the strength and activity of a professional acrobat.

Luke was then taken to the apartment set apart for the young fellow called Bérti by the pirates, which was a large room and stretched a piece of tarpaulin over it, which belonged to some mats and a lounge-near, said:

"Sit down."

"Luke, who had been too much overcome with amazement to speak until now, asked:

"Bérti, who are you?"

"I am Bérti, the only child of Boildar, our chief."

"I owe my life to you."

"I have told you I had told them you were not to be harmed. I saw you and was at your rescue. I am the only person under the shadow of the rock and I told them that you were not to be harmed."

"Then Boildar is your father, my kind."

"Boildar will do nothing which I oppose. I have my own chamber and my own will, and he knows it. I could destroy the corsairs by simply uttering a few words."

"Do you often brave the chief's wrath in this way?"

"This is only the second occasion I have had to do so. On the other occasion you and I were the victims."

"Why did you spare my life while the rest were slaughtered in cold?"

"It will all be answered in time. When I locate my father I will tell you. He laid his hand on his heart, "that you must live."

"Won't you tell me something of yourself? How long have you lived this life?"

The youth fixed his great dark eyes on him in a matter-of-fact sort of way, and said:

"Since my earliest recollection. There was a little while that I was in a school in America. My father placed me there. I was then about ten years old. Then he came one night and took me away."

"Is your mother living?"

"No."

"How long has she been dead?"

"Since I was a child."

Then came a long, painful silence, broken by Luke asking:

"Do you know how long your father has lived this life of a pirate?"

The youth shook his head.

"There is some cause, some mystery; I caught but a glimpse of the man's face as he sat in his hut, but he seems one who had been soured with the world."

"Since I never ask to know the secrets and mysteries of my own life. I find myself here; I know no more. I act upon the promptings and dictations of my heart."

So mysterious, so strange and singular was the boy that the captain was strangely impressed with him. He asked him no more questions. He barely expected his pirate chief to come and end his life, but though he watched closely, he saw nothing of him for several days. The boy was an almost constant companion. He seemed very intelligent and in this subterranean apartment had many books and pamphlets which he read to the prisoner. His friendship for the castaway seemed to grow stronger until it ripened into a passionate love.

Often Luke awoke from a sleep to find the youth gazing on him with a mysterious tenderness. One day he told the young captain that he had been left an infant and had wrung from him a promise that his life should be spared, but that there might be some conditions to this leniency being granted.

For days Luke Ravenwood lived in a sort of dazed, confused sort of way, depending solely upon the youth and fondly thinking of planning for himself.

"I don't want you to go away from me," the youth said, sadly, "you are the only real sunlight that has ever shone upon my heart. I shall be sad when you go away from you."

Then he told the youth that he would never leave his friend in distress. He called him his younger brother, and told him of the home of the young man's remembrance and where there was no scenes of bloodshed, and Begi listened to him, scarcely breathing with rapture.

Oh, if he could live away to some such scene and love forever, what a paradise it would be!

Then he told Luke of wild scenes of carnage, of burning towns, sinking ships and plundering of riches, and of the scenes splendid in their wild terror, that thrilled the blood and harrowed up the soul.

"Have you other prisoners, or am I the only one spared?" he one day asked.

The youth did not answer at once. He took time to think. He was still one of the buccaneers, and he had some conscientious scruples against betraying his trust. But he loved this man himself. Perhaps he had no such friend as Bérti to protect and save him. After several moments' silence he asked:

"Have you another to be put to death?"

"I think not, senor."

"Are you his companion?"

"Not if there is one equally strong."

"Who?"

"Boildar!"

It was strange that such a man as Boildar should have the least influence with any one. The captain was very anxious to see the prisoner and after long persuasion Bérti consented to take him to a place where he might gratify his desire, on the condition that he was not to speak or make his presence known. Luke solemnly promised and was led out of the cavern passage from the grotto along numerous underground passages, and at length entered upon a narrow entrance of one of the subterranean chambers covered with canvas

"A Word to the Wise is Sufficient."

But some stubborn people wait until "down sick" before trying to ward off illness or cure it. The wise recognize in the word "Hood's" assurance of health. For all blood troubles, scrofula, pimples, as well as diseases of the kidneys, liver and bowels, Hood's Sarsaparilla is the effective and faultless cure.

Scrofula—*"I was almost bedfast with scrofula and catarrh. Had no appetite. Hood's Sarsaparilla soon made me stronger and later all the sores disappeared and catarrh stopped."* Nellie Osman, 414 Lyon St., Des Moines, Iowa.

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Hood's Sarsaparilla

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Hood's Pills cure liver ills; the non-irritating and only cathartic to take with Hood's Sarsaparilla.

His companion pulled this aside and bade him look in. He did so.

The prisoner was a beautiful young woman with golden hair, and sad blue eyes. Her apartment was fitted up with Oriental splendor. She sat near the lamp, the rays of which fell on her wondrously fair face. He had scarce gazed upon it, when he gasped:

"My God, it is Eleanor! Eleanor Morris!"

CHAPTER IV.

AN INSULTING PROPOSITION.

For the time being Luke Ravenwood was almost paralyzed by his discovery. After his first exclamation he was silent and motionless. His companion heard his words and saw his emotion, but could not comprehend what it meant.

At first Luke could hardly believe his own eyes, and again and again turned his gaze upon that sad, sweet face to convince himself that he was not dreaming.

No, he was not. That face and that form he would know among ten thousand. She whom he had once loved with such a mad love alike, and in the flesh before him, for Luke was not superstitious enough to believe that he was confronted by a ghost.

He staggered back against the stone wall of the cavern and covered his face with his hands while a flood of thought came over him.

"Come, we must go," whispered Bertil, laying his hand on the arm of his companion. "We dare not stay here longer. You promised me you would not question her."

Luke was a man of great self-composure. He was quick to draw conclusions and readied them accurately. He must, for the sake of the dear being whom he had discovered in such awful peril, be must preserve his composure.

He suffered Bertil to lead him away to his own apartment, where he sat down to think. After a few moments he asked:

"Bertil, my brother, you have been a true friend to me, and I love you as a brother. I know you will always depend on."

"Oh, Senor Ravenwood," the youth whispered, with an excited swelling in his heart, "it would die for you! If you only knew how grateful I am to you, how willingly I would lay down my life for you, then that trust which you have every true heart that loves would be yours."

"I trust you fully. You have not only saved me, but you have given me the information that must be unlawful for you to give away. Perhaps you have also endangered your own life by doing as you have. What you have placed in my hands will be kept sacredly locked in my own heart. Never, never will I betray you. Even though I should be flayed alive, cut to pieces, will I betray you. But what I have seen stirs my curiosity. I had supposed the prisoner a man, now I see it is a woman. How long has she been a prisoner?"

"About one year."

"What is she from a wreck?"

"No; she was taken from a ship that was captured at sea."

"Was she the only one spared?"

"She, I remember well the day of her capture. I was on my father's father on our schooner, the Sea Gull. We were in the Caribbean sea and the lookout discovered a sail and reported it to the officer on deck. My father and I, Ned and after a few moments came back and reported it was a large merchant woman. Then visions of rich plunder was in the mind of the captain on deck. He ordered some guns from the forecastle with every stitch of canvas spread to overhaul the doomed ship.

"She was a fast sailer and over the deep, while we came close in her wake. The long boats were hauled, and a shot sent to bring them to. But they held on their course, and every available man and the third shot struck the ship. Then the splinters flew in showers at every shot and we had overhauled her sufficiently to use cannister, when we plowed her decks and swept all away.

"I had been trained from earliest childhood to such work and thought nothing of it. At last the ship brought to, and we came alongside, the grapplings were thrown and we made fast. The white appealing faces of men and officers appeared over the rail begging for mercy, which made every pirate laugh. At a word from Bolidar we swept over the side and down to the deck of the merchantman, and began shooting and cutting down all who came before us. I kept at the side of my father as I had always done.

"The decks were soon cleared and Bolidar passed to the cabin cautiously, which were large and elegantly furnished. Here a sad sight met our view. On the bed lay a pale, beautiful woman, dead with consumption, and kneeling at her side was a young girl about ten years old with blue eyes and hair of gold. Bolidar gazed on the face of the woman and the child, and the point of his cutlass dropped to the floor. He seemed overcome. I was the first he had known her in such a case by.

"I never saw him so tender with prisoners before. In fact I never knew him to spare one.

"He went to them and spoke something too low for me to understand, and then left. The women were carried to the Sea Gull and cared for and brought here. A few weeks later the elderly woman died, was the mother of the prisoner you have seen, died. She was buried on the hill above the cavern, and Bolidar and the senorita were the only mourners."

"Why does Bolidar retain them by woman?"

"Senor, she is to be his wife!"

"His wife! Will she marry him?"

"She must," declared Bertil.

"Against her will?"

The youth shook his pretty head until the shadow of his long dark lashes rested on his cheeks.

"There is no will here but Bolidar's. He is styled King of the Sea, and he rules with a hand of iron. All must bow to that will."

"And has he decided to make her his wife?"

"Yes, such is his intention, and he never fails to carry out his designs."

The prisoner's head dropped upon his hand, and only the greatest self-control prevented him from uttering a groan of agony.

"Do you know her? Have you ever seen her before?" asked Bertil.

After a moment to collect himself he answered, very cautiously:

"I believe I have. I may be mistaken, but she looks like a girl I once saw in Boston. Do you know her name?"

"It is Senorita Morris."

"Yes; I may have seen her, if she was from Boston."

"I believe he ship was from Boston," Bertil answered.

Though the assumed indifference of Luke Ravenwood temporarily threw Bertil partially off his guard, he saw that the captain was far more interested in the prisoner than he seemed.

Luke shrewdly changed the conversation to their own liberation. He painted a scene of peace and happiness which he hoped they would enjoy in America when they had escaped the pirates, and were at liberty to live in peaceful homes.

"I will go with you, dear senor—go anywhere you will; just so you permit me to be with you. Then I shall be happier than miserable away from you."

"You shall go with me, Bertil, and ever be with me. I owe too much to you not to feel a brotherly love for the brother of the dead can."

Two days later the youth informed the prisoner that Bolidar would pay him a visit.

This was to be the first visit the pirate chief had made since his capture, and he looked for it to be a very brief one. What could be the object of the visit? That the pirate captain had some unholy mode this visit with no good intention he was quite certain, and Luke Ravenwood looked upon the coming interview with great anxiety.

The day passed, however, and Bolidar did not come. Next day he heard a voice sounding like deep thunder outside in the passage near, and a moment later the iron studded door of the prisoner's chief stalked into the chamber.

"Well, senor," he said, in perfect English, "how are you faring as my guest?"

The young captain fixed his brown eye upon the face of the pirate chief, and said:

"As well as one can, deprived of liberty."

"Deprived of liberty, senor? Don't imagine yourself a prisoner. You are my guest, and my honored one."

"Guests are permitted to come and depart at will, but no such privilege is granted me. I am confined to the narrow limits of this subterranean chamber."

"Think, senor, that I have heard of men who occupied dungeons far worse than this, and who were glad to get out on wish that you should be kept beneath the earth all the time. Such confinement would in time impair your health. I want you to be free to enjoy the air, the sea and the sky, and I promise to you will that ideas in mind."

"Then I am not to be slain?"

"No; whatever put such a silly notion in your head?"

Luke could have told him that he had been informed to such effect by much very his original intentions, had he desired to do so, but he kept silence on that point.

"Were any of my brave seamen spared?" he asked, after a moment's thoughtful silence.

"No," Bolidar answered, with a nod shake of the head, "not one. Dead men tell no tales. All you alone was saved."

Ravenwood knew the scoundrel was speaking falsely. He had seen two of his brave seamen spared, though with their heads cleft in twain by cutlasses. He knew full well that it was the original design to slay him, but he dissembled to keep this knowledge to himself. He knew also that those who overheard the conversation, beating about the bush with Bolidar, both understood perfectly, and Bertil said:

"You are Captain Bolidar, I believe?" he said.

"I have heard of you in the states."

"I did not know that my fame had spread so far," said Bolidar.

"You are more generally known as King of the Sea."

"I have been given that title by some, I believe," he answered.

"Captain Bolidar, there is no need for us to beat about the bush. We both know each you, and you know me. Frankness and truthfulness will answer us better now than dissembling. Nothing is to be gained by it."

"I agree with you, senor."

"You are the great pirate chief of the Western Seas."

"Well, I am what is sometimes known as a free rover. I do battle for gold, and the brave men who will die for me and with me if need be, I can count on them. Your Commodore Vane was a brave man, and I trust he has become satisfied of their bravery."

"If I am to be given my liberty, to be made free to go where I please, and that you may have had in your possession, I am expected to do something in return."

The face of Bolidar grew more stern and dark and there was a wicked gleam in his keen, black eye, while the youth, Bertil, who meanwhile had been silent, but near the captain, whispered a few words in the ear of the captain.

"Yes," said the chief, in his deep, stern voice, "if you gain your liberty, if I spare your life, I shall expect you to serve me in some capacity."

"In other words, I am to join your band?"

"No senor; I do not expect you to become a pirate, but I shall expect you to serve me in some capacity."

"I am ready to do anything within reason, and which does not involve dishonor."

"Should he join it? The proposition was an insult, but to refuse was death. But he felt it would be no harm to deceive the scoundrels and, perhaps by becoming, or pretending to become one of their number, he might be better enabled to rescue the captive Eleanor.

He turned his eyes upon Bertil and the youth's whole face was gleaming with anxious hope.

"Accept, accept!" he whispered, in the prisoner's ear.

Bolidar saw the act and heard the words,

BLOOD CURE SENT FREE

A Free Trial Treatment Sent Privately by Mail to All Who Suffer.

A Remarkable Remedy for a Terrible Affliction—The Cure Is Permanent.

A free trial treatment is being sent out by the State Medical Institute in order to demonstrate the fact that the most horrible of all diseases can be cured. There is a good deal of controversy over this subject among those who declare the disease incurable but the State Medical Institute has unquestionably refuted the notion of this new remedy is positive. The institute has been in existence for has had a long and varied experience treating this disease of the blood and about two years ago began a long series of experiments before found the exact specific that offeats the poison and finally drives it from the system. Having personally examined many hopeless and discouraged cases, and thoroughly with every detail of the disease, his discovery has proved equally one has never failed him. One of his recent cures was a most hopeless case, the disease having caused the hair to fall out and the body was one mass of putrescent sores, skin blotched and unsightly blotches. In ten days the entire outer skin was

healed and there was noticeable improvement in all other respects. A brief combination of the remedy brought about a radical cure.

The free trial treatment has saved a great many who otherwise were doomed to early destruction, and it was the object which induced the institute to make the offer. In all cases where the sores have become characteristic of the disease, the sufferer fully realizes the cause and nature of his or her affliction but a great many who have inherited the taint in the blood do not realize that it should apply. The institute for they is made book describing fully the cause and effect of the disease, and will be sent free upon application. Send your name and address to the State Medical Institute, Rochester, N. Y., and you will find, and they will forward, prepaid, a free trial treatment that will be found to be of never such wonderful relief, such an ecstatic feeling of joy for the improvement shown as to fully compensate for the suffering and despair that such a terrible failure has caused. Write today without fail.

whispered though they were, and his dark face was again wreathed in a smile as he said:

"You seem to have charmed the boy, and it is indeed worth a friendship. Bertil is all powerful among the men, but he could not save you, if it was known you had refused such an offer as mine."

Still Luke Ravenwood hesitated.

CHAPTER V.

"YOU ENCOMPASS HER RUIN."

The mysterious youth knelt before the captive and fixed his dark eyes on the pale face of the young captain, said in a most pleading, earnest voice:

"Accept, oh, accept, senor. It is ruin and death to refuse. I know what the result will be; I love you, senor, for me accept."

The prisoner had in the meanwhile been busy making up his mind as to what he would do. He arose to the stern chieftain and said:

"It is needless for me to say that I have always abhorred the life you follow, you know that. That the men who make successful buccaneers must have the virtue of courage no one can deny. What change in their condition would be made were I engaged in such a calling we do not know. I might be instrumental in saving their lives, and be one of your most desperate men. I know the stern face of a pirate is death. If captured. I know that the life of a free rover is filled with exciting adventure and danger, and it has its fascinations. I also know if I refuse your offer I live, if I refuse I die, and but one moment to decide. I will accept."

"Oh, thank you, thank you! You are saved, you have made me happy," declared the youth, fervently, without the least fear of the prisoner.

"By accepting you have bewitched the boy," declared the chief, while a strange expression flitted over his face. "You must have given your consent to become one of us, no further initiation is necessary. We will welcome you as one of us, so long as you are true to our interests, but woe to you will betide you if that we will stand no trifling. At the first appearance of treachery, or any thing like treachery, or betrayal, will be your death."

"That is what I expect, sir. In the event of my betrayal of you I expect a bullet or a dagger at my heart at once."

"I am glad to see you appreciate the situation. Now, sir, you can come with me, and I will show you your quarters, provisional, or rather my kingdom, for I am as absolute a monarch in my realm as the reigns on earth."

Luke Ravenwood accompanied the pirate chief with the youth Bertil close at his side. They passed by a long, narrow underground through many devious winding caverns, some so low they had to stoop and some high enough to walk erect, until finally the path from the torch failed to reach them.

Then the chief paused, struck a light, and the light of the day falling upon the face of the youth Bertil he saw at first.

After a few moments he became accustomed to the light, and they found they in a valley extending up the bay in which was a considerable village. Here were women and children, cattle, horses, sheep and sick, finally men of every clime and nation. The Spaniard, the Portuguese, the Englishman, the American Negro, Italian, Lascare, mulatto, Creole, and every race, ranging from black as Erebus, were mingling together in the most friendly manner. Ravenwood could not detect the most extreme social equalities.

There was an earthwork thrown up in front of the town on which were mounted two dozen ugly-looking, dark-mouthed cannon. A flag staff was near it, but no banner was flung to the breeze. The men and boys of the town on which were knives or cutlasses and pistols, while muskets with bayonets fixed were stacked near the great guns.

"You see," said the king, pointing to the array of men, "my people prepared to defend my kingdom. Look on that beauty in the bay," pointing to a large, trim schooner, with low, dark hull, and long, tapering masts, "there is my sea palace. When I choose to make a voyage I go in state, travel in my own ship. There is not a craft afloat that can equal her speed. The fleets of the world are welcome to come on the sea if they desire. I was once chased by three men-of-war, and led them out in a string, three leagues apart, according to the measure of their speed, when I turned on the first and sunk her before the second could reach her. The second was in flames ere the third could come to her relief, and when the third put about on her best sailing quarter, I was far beyond her and sunk her at our leisure. In this safe place I have many a prize brought in vain by all the great powers. Here we are safe, for we are shielded in the inlet that none can find us."

"I perceive it," said the very neatly concealed. A fleet might sail past this harbor a hundred times without discovering the inlet. As a sailor I am curious to know how you got in and out of the harbor."

"That, sir, is accomplished only by the best seamanship. If we have the tide to help us we can sail in, but we prefer that by having a skilled man at the wheel. If the tide is not favorable we have been able to catch hold of enough from the land to enable us to warp in. Many times we warp her in the remainder of the way."

"I should suppose you would anchor them now, and the Sea King introduced the merchantman. A mulatto named Constelling was first lieutenant and a black, looking Englishman, called John Brown, was second or third officer aboard.

"This is Luke Ravenwood, our new recruit," said Lieutenant Brown, and him to the arsenal and furnish him arms. No gentleman appears on the street without a sword and pistol at his side."

The low-browed, sullen Englishman let the war up the street with the new recruit at his heels, and the youth following close after. They came to a small, low cut in the face of sandal rock, with an iron door in front of it.

The lieutenant opened the door with a powderman's key, and they found they had vested a large apartment in which was an extensive array of arms of every kind, with boxes, kegs and bags of ammunition.

"Every man is allowed to select his own weapons," the Englishman chuckled while the flame of hell face seemed to glow diabolical. "The capen wants 'em all to have that which suits him best," he added.

Luke Ravenwood had practiced with swords and cutlasses, and after some little trouble selected a pair of the same kind and heavy; one that could be used for thrusting or cutting. Then came the selection of a brace of pistols. After an examination he found a king to be an expert in such weapons, he chose a pair of silver mounted duelers. The locks were of the latest pattern, the flints and pans were of the best, correctly made, and the barrels rifled. He was given, also, some lead and a ladle to run his own bullets, and a flask of powder and a flannel for wadding.

"Now, you are fixed, shipmate," said the lieutenant. "See what ye kin do."

"I intend practicing shortly. I would like to become familiar with the weapons I am to use."

"Oh, yes, upon the ridge there in the mangroves you can find targets in abundance, and the cap'n has a boy that is skilled his men become. Here's a gun, if ye want it."

Ravenwood took the gun, though he believed would not need it this way. At any rate he could throw it away when he became tired of it.

"Come with me and I will help you mold your bullets," said Bertil.

With flint, steel and the youth soon kindled a fire and they proceeded to run the bullets. Each one of which was about forty, they went to the grove alluded to. It was a high plateau a mile from the village, and surrounded by a dense growth of mangroves, which it was almost impossible to penetrate.

A solitary tree, standing apart from the others, was selected as a target. With his knife Ravenwood clipped a white spot on the bark, and stepping off thirty paces, he raised one of the pistols and fired.

"Almost in the center," cried Bertil, who ran to see the effect of the shot.

"The pistol holds well to the spot. Now, let me have a shot," declared the youth, and he sent a second shot within half an inch of the first.

"They are excellent. I will now reload and try them at forty paces."

The weapons held up well, and he continued to increase the distance until he found he was tolerably accurate at a hundred yards.

"Senor, with a very little practice you will be the best shot on the island. It is very necessary that you reach that at once,

(Continued on page fifteen.)

A WOMAN SCORNED.

Earl Alston's Bride---Driven Forth Into the World Upon Her Wedding Night---The Serpent in Love's Eden.

By ELLA MARTIN,

Author of "Not His First Love," "A Brave Coward," Etc.

(Copyrighted, 1899.)

SYNOPSIS.

Alston Hall stands close to the Atlantic shore. Lady Alston tells Earl, her only son, that she flirted with Count de Vilfroy before her marriage, and that the count had sworn vengeance and afterward abducted her child Earl's father, she had told the Alston Hall people, died for love of the count and brought Earl and Edith, her daughter, to live in the secluded old house on the New England coast. Virginia, the supposed child of a dead friend, lost in a wreck at sea, is adopted by Lady Alston. Virginia had a brother, but he had not been found. Earl Alston vows vengeance on Count de Vilfroy for the murder of her father. Virginia, beautiful and cruel, overhears Lady Alston's confession and also Earl's statement that he loves Lillian Dale, a beautiful but poor seamstress. Virginia is in love with Earl, and plots to destroy Lillian. Edith is impressed with Henry Ashmore, the handsome coachman of Alston Hall. Earl is married to Lillian Dorne and brings her home to Alston Hall. Earl tells Lillian's astonished father of his love for Lillian Dale, who lives near by. He also tells Lillian that there is a wrong in the past which Virginia deems that he shall now aid her in separating Earl and his bride. Earl declines and threatens to throw Virginia into the sea. He defies him with a fearful scorn, increasing insanity appears which she holds. Earl decides to take Lillian, his wife, and flee to Europe. Virginia sends fires the incriminating papers with instructions to examine them when at sea. Earl, in the evening of his wedding day, is summoned to the bed of Jules Monteray to hear his dying confession. Virginia, disguised, lurks outside and the confession doesn't fail to reach her ears. Earl and Lillian start that night. A man appears to her window and tells her that Earl is going to her chamber and in the morning the stranger is found lying dead near the gate, stabbed in the back by Virginia, who lays the murder on Lillian.

CHAPTER VIII.

EARL ALSTON'S RETURN.

Another morning dawned, a morning dark and gloomy, with thick clouds obscuring the sun, and a damp chill in the air that betokened rain.

Inside the Hall all was confusion; the servants were huddled together, talking in excited whispers, and Lady Alston was in a state of nervous prostration which required Edith's constant attention.

The cause of all this excitement was the fact that the body of the murdered man had been found outside the wall that surrounded Alston Hall. Mr. Nospicion, however, had fallen on any of the inmates of the Hall. The body had been removed by the authorities, and a great mystery was felt over the discovery of the murdered stranger. The fact that he was found dead by the roadside in the vicinity of Alston Hall had no significance in the minds of the villagers.

It was not the bare fact that a murder had been done that had brought about the illness of the mistress of the Hall. Although that in itself were terrible enough. But shortly after the discovery of the body was made Virginia Winfield entered, with her peculiar, gliding motion, the boudoir of Lady Alston; and a half hour later when she left the room, a heap lay on the floor in front of Alston, a shadow of shame lay over Alston Hall.

In her own apartments Lillian knelt with clasped hands, her white face buried in the downy softness of a silken couch, her golden hair streaming in a shower of glory over her white dress. Ever and anon a moan, pitiful to hear, broke from her tense lips. She had not dared to face the world since last night, for she feared her altered appearance would draw forth comment, and she felt that she could not bear it. Her story must be told, there was no alternative; but only to Earl, who loved her, could she tell it. Ah, what a rock of refuge his love was! How glad she was that someone loved her, someone who would protect and shield her henceforth, who would make her forget the past and all its darkness and despair.

How brave and noble and loving he was, this young master of Alston Hall! How could she summon courage to tell him?

"I must! I must!" she moaned. "I am not his wife. If I would not marry the secret to my grave. But he is so tender, so loving that I need not fear to make my confession to him."

The day grew on apace, and the rumble of thunder, which heralded a storm, shook the old house, and the lightning cleft the sky in sharp, jagged lines.

"Oh, I hope Earl will reach home before the storm breaks!" she exclaimed, starting to her feet and peering from the window at the gathering storm. He was here. Oh! he must come soon; it is already growing dark."

In her anxiety for his welfare she forgot for a moment her position in the house.

Henry Ashmore, the coachman of the building, so she did not see the master of the Hall, had on his return home just before the storm burst in all its fury. The first rain drops began to fall as Earl sprang from his horse and threw the reigns to the waiting groom, who led the panting animal to the stables. Earl turned and ran up the damp stone steps, and was immediately admitted by Robbins. It was evident from his appearance that he had heard the news, but he asked no questions.

"Sir," said the butler, "your mother wishes you to go directly to her boudoir; she must see you, she says, before you go to your wife."

Earl wondered a little at this strange request, but decided to obey the summons. His mother and Lillian were quite upset by the tragedy of the previous night.

Poor, dear mother," he murmured, "she is so proud, and she doubtless fancies this murder, which occurred so near the Hall, will leave a stigma on the old name. But," he added, proudly, "the name of Alston is above reproach, and no breath of suspicion can ever touch it."

He then ascended the broad, mahogany steps which led to his mother's rooms, but his thoughts were of Lillian. He was impatient to see his bride, to hold her in his arms and kiss her lovely lips.

An hour passed, a full hour, during which Earl was closeted, as it were, with his mother, and then he was summarily dismissed into Lillian's presence. There was a horror burning in his soul, and his countenance are in his heart. He was not himself, and was totally responsible for what followed.

Lillian, who was walking the floor restlessly, sprang toward him with outstretched hands, a gentle solicitude in her voice as she spoke to him.

"Oh, Earl! What has happened to you? Why do you look so white and wild?"

But Earl shrank away from her, warding off her outstretched hands by extending his own with a gesture that warned her not to touch him.

"Don't touch me," he said, in hoarse tones, and she recoiled involuntarily, for the change in his voice told her that something of the truth and that he was not inclined to forgive her.

She made no further attempt to approach him, but stood silent and erect before him like some figure cut in marble. A great calmness had settled over her, and in her heart was a hopelessness which rendered her almost to recklessness.

And thus they stood regarding each other, while the roar of the storm outside filled the night; and the howling of the wind, the downpour of the rain, the vivid lightning, followed by the loud claps of thunder were never forgotten by either.

The silence was oppressive, the silence that had fallen between them while they stood regarding each other, listening, although unconsciously, to the noise of the storm.

Then Lillian could bear it no longer, and cried out:

"Speak, Earl! I conjure you! Why do you torture me like this? Why do you keep me in suspense? What have you to say to me?"

"Nothing," he answered, coldly. "I have nothing to say to you, and only one question to ask, which I command you to answer truthfully. I shall be able to learn in time whether you tell me the truth, and falsehood will not avail you in this."

"Earl!"

"Silence! Answer me: Was that man—you know whom I mean—your husband?"

A gasp parted the white lips of the beautiful girl, but no other sound came from them, but her great, pansy eyes were fixed in supplication upon the stern man, who had sworn, but a few days since, to love and protect her.

"Answer me!" he commanded, sternly.

"Oh, how did you learn it?" she gasped out, almost unconsciously. "No besides myself could have known of it!"

"Answer me, yes or no, if you please."

"Yes, Earl, it is true. I will tell you all now. Someone must have played the spy last night, for I would rather you had heard it first from me."

"No doubt of that," he said, in a cold, hard voice," no doubt you have a story already contracted, adventuress that you are."

"Earl! Earl!" she cried, in a hoarse, strained whisper, as she darted forward and flung herself at his feet; and clasping her hands about his knees, she turned her lovely white face up to his. And her great, pathetic eyes were filled with unshed tears.

"Oh, Earl, hear me! I know it looks black for me, but do not judge me without a hearing. Are you not my husband, dear?"

"Love you!" he cried, in tones of loathing. "Love a creature like you!"

He tore himself loose from her clinging hold, and drew farther away from her.

Lillian's fair, golden head drooped till it rested on her clasped hands, and a faint moan issued from her lips.

"It is enough," he said. "You need say no more. You confess, and I can believe the rest now."

Then she raised her head and gazed at him blankly, her eyes filled with a dumb agony that would have touched a heart of stone. "The rest, Earl? What is the rest?"

He laughed, a hard, cold laugh, that struck a chill to the heart of the kneeling girl.

"As if you didn't know," he said. "But to convince you that I do know, I will say that there was a witness to your interview with your paramour last night, one who saw you strike the fatal blow, and watched where you hid the weapon.

"You underrated your nerve when it is for you to try to deceive me further. I know for what purpose you married me. And no Alston ever shielded a criminal."

Hitherto Lillian had listened, then, amazed and bewildered, on account of the coldness he exhibited toward her; but now when she knew that he believed her guilty of murder, she sprang to her feet and stood before him, her head erect, her dark eyes flashing, and her small hands clenched till the marks of the nails underneath indented the soft, white flesh.

"You believe that!" she cried, in tones ringing with indignation. "You dare to think that of me? You dare to accuse me of murder, you would brave them all, my husband and took upon yourself the vows of a husband!

"True, they are not binding now, but I was ignorant when I took them. I married my wife in anything but name, and I believed him dead. But I shall always be grateful to him for having been alive, notwithstanding the miserable past; for I should have known you for what you are—a coward!

"Yes, but for him, you, a murderess and adventuress, would have been the proud wife of an Alston, of an earl—do you understand?—an earl. You could never be nagging bigger game than you ever dreamed of, for instead of being the master of Alston Hall, you married an earl; for, though it is not generally known, I am Lord Alston, the last of a noble race.

"But the marriage is not binding. I had a narrow escape, and I thank heaven that you are not my wife."

"And I, too, thank heaven that I am not your wife," retorted Lillian. "I would rather die than be the wife of a contemptible coward and snob."

When harsh words like these pass between two who have loved each other, the freshness and beauty have gone from that love forever. It is like brushing the down from a peach.

Already the leaven of bitterness was working in poor Lillian's soul. The girl in her had died during the strain of the past few hours, and she was a wounded now—a woman hardened and embittered by means of a wounded love. Never would she be the same again—never in all the years to come.

"I had meant to give you up to justice," said Earl, when the hot blood mounted to his face at her stinging words, "but I will give you one chance for your life—that of flight. It is not for your sake that I spare you, but for the sake of the name of Alston, on which never before rested a blot or a stain. It must not be known that an Alston ever married an adventuress. I shall go abroad, the world must think that we went together. Then I and the world must be told that my wife is buried abroad.

"Oh!" he added, "that I should be obliged to dissemble in order to save the old name from disgrace."

"Hear me, oh, my lord of Alston," said Lillian, tragically, and there was a sneer in her voice when she pronounced that name. "I am innocent. I do not ask you to believe that; if by raising my hand I could make you believe in me, I would not raise it. But it is true that someone is guilty; some one who has sworn to work my ruin. I shall spend my life in trying to bring the crime home to the real culprit. Then when it is discovered I will send me again, my lord, and the world shall know how unjust it was of this subject of which you stand so much in awe, shall know how unjust it was of you to have accused the woman he had sworn to protect of a heinous crime, and drove her forth to face the world, friendless, penniless and alone."

Earl's face grew white as death, and then flushed deeply as the words left her lips.

It was a strange scene in the luxurious room, with its heavy tapestry, richly upholstered couch, its soft, silken carpets and thick rugs, strewn in profusion over the polished oaken floor; and in the center Lillian stood, looking like a young, fair queen, with streaming golden hair and eyes dilated with anger and scorn, while Earl stood before her stern and accusing; and over all the soft glow of the storm light.

There was a moment of silence, then Earl sprang forward and caught her delicate wrists in a vise-like grip.

"I do not believe in your innocence," he said, in low, hissing tones, "and I will not longer disgrace this house by your presence; the very atmosphere you breathe is tainted by it, the very air is poisonous to me."

He dragged her to the door and flung it back. It opened into a veranda whose honeysuckle was overgrown with shining, green ivy vines entwined with vivid crimson flowers, now dripping wet with the rain.

Earl dragged his struggling wife into the veranda, and then, with a strength that was herculean, he forced her down the steps and into the storm.

"Alston Hall shall not shelter a murderess."

Lillian raised the hand he had just freed on high, and in a voice that was piercing with woe:

"Never will I forgive you for this cowardly deed, though the day will come when you will sue for pardon at my feet. My

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Just Before the Fourth. BLADE'S COLORED PICTURES, Issue of July 1st, NEXT WEEK, Will Embellish "THE GLORIOUS FOURTH." Illustrations BOTH PATRIOTIC AND COMIC. It will also contain the words of the great songs of the nation---"Sweet Sue," "The Sunshine of Paradise Alley," "Hail Columbia!," "Red, White and Blue," and "Battle Hymn of the Republic."

curse upon you, Karl Alston, and upon Alston Hall forever!"

As soon as these words were ended, she darted away from his side out into the night and the storm.

As her white-robed figure disappeared in the darkness, a sudden change of feeling swept over the young lord of Alston, a realization of his harshness, a conviction of her innocence, and he seemed to awake from a nightmare of madness, and involuntarily he sent a cry after her fleeing form, a cry full of remorse and longing.

"Lillian, Lillian, Lillian!" Like a bugle note it sounded clear and loud, but was swallowed up in the roar of the storm, never reaching poor, frightened Lillian's ears.

Just then a vivid flash of lightning cleft the sky, and showed him the white figure fleeing straight toward the rock-bound coast, where many feet below the jagged rocks the inky black waters of the Atlantic boiled and foamed in perfect fury, as the huge waves dashed themselves against the cliffs.

"My God—the sea!" he cried.

Then as flash after flash followed, and he stood there staring straight ahead, power-

"Go!" he said. "Alston Hall will not shield a murderess."

less to move and knowing full well that he could not avert the fate she had marked out for herself, even though he should give chase, for the ocean was nearly reached now, and in a short, something seemed to snap in his brain, his strength left him, and he could scarcely stand, though he seemed powerless to move hand or foot. He dreaded to see the next streak of light would reveal, but he held his breath until it came. And then a cry escaped him, for it showed him Lillian on the very verge of the cliffs, him Lillian on the very verge of the cliffs, her white dress all drenched with the rain, her white dress all drenched with the rain, and clinging about her slender, graceful form, and her golden hair wet and straight. He put out his hand as if to stop her, then it fell powerless to his side, and he waited for the next flash of lightning. It came and was gone in an instant, but it showed him what he had dreaded, namely, the barren rocks only, for the white-robed figure was no longer in sight. He knew then that the hungry sea had swallowed it up, and with a low moan of despair he fell across the wet veranda, his face buried in the trailing, dripping wet vines.

And thus he was found in the early morning unconscious.

But when Henry, the coachman, was wanted to drive to the village for a physician, he could not be found.

CHAPTER IX.
THE MAID.

Karl St. Clair and his wife reached the port where they were to take a certain steamer, in safety. But they arrived there just an hour too late. The steamer had left the dock, and the one of all on earth most anxious to embark was left behind.

Was it the worst? Afterward Karl St. Clair locked back upon what he now regarded as a dire calamity, and saw in it what he termed the hand of Fate.

But just now he realized as he never had before the full import of the words, "too late."

He must wait in the city now until the departure of the next steamer, and what might happen in that length of time? He could scarcely hope to escape Virginia's vengeance if once she discovered their whereabouts. She must be aware of their flight by this time, he reasoned, and he knew that she would try to outwit him. She would, if possible, put the story which had caused him to flee from his wife's hands. This thought gave him untold anxiety.

Ah, if he had but known that his wife had at that very moment the packet of papers in which Lillian had threatened him, in her possession, his anxiety would have increased tenfold. But he might not put the knowledge to some account, for difficult as it would have been to abstract the papers from his wife's reticule without exciting suspicion, he would have done so at all hazards, and the fact would not have been their next receptacle.

He, however, had forgotten all about the packet, not having had occasion to open her reticule.

They were putting up at an obscure boarding-house, for Karl knew that if Virginia tried to seek him out he could easily be found if he took rooms at one of the leading hotels.

He went out later to seek for someone who would act as companion to his wife. It was a difficult task he had before him; he knew it would not be easy to find a woman who would be willing to go on such short notice across the Atlantic with them.

He made inquiries and did what else he could toward obtaining what he wanted, but without the least show of success.

It was getting dark, and he had turned his steps in the direction of his lodging place, when he came face to face with Henry Ashmore, the coachman from Alston Hall.

Karl St. Clair started back at the sight of him, and involuntarily uttered his name.

But for that Henry might have passed him unnoticed, an intent was he upon his own purposes. But when he heard his name spoken in that tone of surprise and alarm, he turned and, beholding Karl, uttered an exclamation in as great astonishment as had the other.

Karl's first thought was that Henry was an emissary of Virginia Winfield; but noting that the other's surprise was genuine, he felt relieved.

"You are the last man I expected to see in this city, Mr. St. Clair," said Henry, thinking to explain his surprise. "I did not know you were absent from home, though it has not seemed since the night my master was married."

Karl longed to ask how things were at the Hall, he wanted to know whether Virginia had not taken steps toward finding him, and what she had done toward undermining the happiness of Earl Alston and his bride; but he dared not ask the questions, least he should betray his interest in affairs to the keen, intelligent coachman.

If he could have known the state of affairs at the Hall he would have been surprised into forgetting his own trouble, but he would have been horrified by Henry's expression.

But how could he know that only last night Lillian Dorne had flung herself from the rocky shore of the treacherous Atlantic, that Earl Alston, whom everybody thought the soul of honor and nobility, had mercilessly driven her out into the raging storm in cold blood, accusing her of the worst of crimes—that of murder! And that she, who once had loved him, had left her curse upon him and upon Alston Hall? How could he know that the master of the Hall lay near to death's door in consequence, with the name of Lillian ever upon his lips, and in his delirium crying out that he had driven her to her death, that he should see her no more till the sea gives up its dead?

If he had known all this he would have believed that Virginia, wicked and unscrupulous as he knew her to be, could not have had a hand in it before. In a short a time, if the foundation for the tragedy had not been already laid.

He had helped lay the foundation, and it was well for his peace of mind that he did not know the truth.

There was nothing more to be said between the two men, but each appeared to be unsatisfied; each seemed to have something to say which he hesitated about saying.

Finally Henry, who appeared to be the braver of the two, said, hesitatingly:

"May I ask you, Mr. St. Clair, not to mention having met me here? I did not ask for leave of absence, as I could not make any explanations, though my motive was a good one. I thought you understand, that it is just possible you might mention it casually, and so I asked you."

"I will cheerfully grant your request," replied Karl, heartily. "In fact, I shall not return for some time, and would like to ask the same favor of you; and I know I can trust you to mention to anyone the fact that you saw me here."

"You may depend on it, Mr. St. Clair," answered Henry. "But pardon me if I seem inquisitive, but I have an object in asking. Are you going away?"

"Yes, I sail in three days with my family; but I do not wish it known. I have good reasons, of course, and I can trust you, Mr. Ashmore."

"You can trust me, Mr. St. Clair," answered Henry. "And," he added, "I have a great favor to ask of you. I have a young friend who wishes to leave this country. She is an orphan, and desires to secure the position of lady's maid, or something of the kind, where she has crossed the ocean. If I might venture to ask you to take her into your care and help her to secure a position—"

"Say no more," broke in Karl, quickly; "nothing could have happened that would suit me better. I have been all day searching for one who could be induced to attend my wife during our absence. You see, her maid was about to leave her service in order to be married, so when we left she remained behind. What she wants now is someone who will be a sort of a companion to her, and also help her look after Leo.

"Let me see your young friend at once. I am sure anyone whom you recommend will suit."

"Thank you for saying that," replied Henry. "I am sure she will suit you, and if you will give me your address I will take her there tomorrow. I must see her first and have her make ready for the journey."

For a moment Karl hesitated. Was this but a part of a plot to discover his wife's whereabouts? Was this the reason for the strange visit the coachman from Alston Hall should have a friend whom he was seeking to aid at this particular time? Would the friend whom he was to bring tomorrow prove to be Virginia Winfield? If so, all would be lost; his wife would be put in possession of his secret, and she would turn away from him. His beautiful Inez would look upon him with loathing and contempt.

Oh, he could not bear it! He would rather die than be obliged to part from the woman he loved a thousand times dearer than his own life.

He knew that Virginia would hesitate at nothing to gain her purpose. But Henry—could he believe ill of him? No matter, he would be on the safe side and trust no one just now.

"Give me your address," he said, "and I will call tomorrow for the young lady's answer."

Henry unhesitatingly complied.

"I will call early," said Karl, as he took the card on which Henry had written the address. "So that I can confidently speak in case she should have any objections to accompanying us."

There will be no danger of that; she will be only too glad of the opportunity. She will have some shopping to do, however, and may not be able to take up her abode with you until you are ready to leave the city."

Then the two men parted, both elated over what they termed their unprecedented luck.

Karl hastened back to his rooms to impart his success to his wife. He did not wish to be long absent from her, for he was so conscious of Virginia's power that he wanted to be ever by Inez's side, lest what Virginia should find him out he would prevent her delivering the packet at all hazards.

He had requested his wife to see no one in his absence, and he believed she would obey him; still, Virginia might contrive to get the packet delivered to her.

Another installment of this very interesting romance will appear in next week's Ledger.

Worn by an American.

Mrs. Charlemagne Tower, wife of the American ambassador to St. Petersburg (formerly minister in Vienna), was presented to the czarina ashort time ago. The dress which she wore is of dove-gray crepe de chine, with applications of real lace and pearl paillettes on the overdress, and with ruches and bouquets of the same material on the underdress, the whole made over gray silk. The high bodice is slightly draped, and has an empiecement of real lace, decorated with the tiniest of lavender blossoms, and finished off at the neck and waist with folds of lavender silk.

An evening dress made for her is very beautiful. The foundation is of black silk, finished off with alternate rouleaux of narrow black-and-white net. The overskirt is of black tulle, the applications of net the whole worked with moonbeam glitter. The bodice is high and slightly draped with a jabot of the same, black tulle intermixed with two shades of turquoise-blue chiffon and finished off with the narrowest of waistbands.

When there is a traveling costume of red chocolate-brown cloth, trimmed with pearl-gray velours rétroit, tufted with chenille the color of the cloth. The blouse is of pearl-gray taffeta, embroidered in applique-lozenges in same, and finished off with a jabot of gray mousseline, with real lace insertion. Thus attired, one of the most beautifully gowned women at the Russian court.

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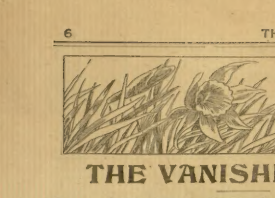

THE VANISHING MEN.

Sharp Detectives Baffled---A Mystery of the Air---Playing at the Hazardous Game of Life and Death.

By MARO ROLFE,

Author of "The Crystal Sphere," "The Wooden Indian's Widow," Etc.

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SYNOPSIS.

Ralston Sprague, supposed murderer of Brantford Morris, is pursued by Detectives Siddons and Dill. They corner him in a room of the top floor of a nine-story building, when he mysteriously disappears. Again they follow Sprague into a church and up the interior of the spire where he again disappears. They are dumbfounded. Ralston Sprague wants to marry Alice Fitz-Arden a millionaire. The detectives are mystified and baffled by the strange silence of Sprague and his pals having the power to vanish at any time. It is evident that the villains have discovered unheard of means to escape.

CHAPTER IX.

HE WIRED IN AND WIRED OUT.

When Amsdell told Dill and Siddons that he and Marston had a theory that Sprague was more wonderful than all that had happened recently in the case of Ralston Sprague, Stanley Dill was somewhat incredulous and Tenney Siddons put his doubts in vigorous language.

"Well," persisted Amsdell. "Read the letter to begin with. That may be of use to you with the rest."

Dill was already opening the envelope which bore this superscription in a neat, bold hand:

"Mr. Stanley Dill. Kindness of Mr. Senter Marston."

"You see, he has us all down fine," commented Marston. "How he knew me or my name, I can't give a good guess. He spoke to Amsdell here as 'Cyrus,' my dear boy, so you see he was posted about him, too."

Dill was holding Ralston Sprague's letter in a trembling hand and devouring its contents with a tense eagerness.

It began, "My dear Mr. Stanley Dill," and ran thus: "My confidence for your bon luck at the telegraph pole. You are quite unequal to the game you are trying to play and you must now be convinced that you are fated to lose. I could have killed you and others of your party easily long since, but I have no wish to draw your blood in am a business man, not a thug. I am able to make it an object to you to treat with me on a business basis, and I am willing not only to turn a six sided bunch of money your way, but to satisfy your ambition at the same time. To be plain, I can put it in your way to solve the mystery of the murder of Brantford Morris; and that is something you will never accomplish so long as you waste your time making it uncomfortable for me. Address me as before, and be wise enough to have a square talk with me. You know by this time that I mean you no personal harm. Believe me, dear Mr. Dill, the man you know as Ralston Sprague."

Dill read this message twice, then folded it in half and put it in Siddons's outstretched hand.

Siddons read it carefully and handed it back.

Neither of the two detectives commented on the letter.

"Now, Marston," asked Dill, "why did not you two men make that man a prisoner?"

"I told you we could not do it," answered Marston, "and Amsdell intimated that we had had some experience that eclipsed everything that has happened lately. When you know about them, you will understand."

"If you have had any experiences that lay other cases hopelessly in the shade, I would like to know what they are."

"And so would I," said Dill, dryly, "I will tell you about it," said Amsdell.

"So. Now, what time was it when Ralston Sprague came out and gave you the letter?" asked Dill.

"About 10 o'clock this evening."

"Was he alone?"

"All alone," Amsdell hesitated a moment as if to collect his thoughts, then continued:

"He addressed us as suavely as if he had bottled up two of his best friends because of two detectives on his trail.

"After he had handed the letter to Marston with the remark Marston repeated to you, he added:

"'Of course you gentlemen won't want to make me any trouble until your chief reads my letter.'

"I grabbed him by the collar of his coat and the coat came off of his body, but not the sleeves on his arms, and he squirmed away and ran into the house he had come out of."

"And the part of the coat you captured? Where is that?" inquired Dill.

"There is that package on the desk."

Dill opened the package and found not one partial coat, but two.

"What about this second coat body?" he asked.

"That's part of the same story," Marston volunteered. "It gets more interesting further on."

"Well," Amsdell went on, deliberately, "I suppose you won't believe this, but it was not more than three minutes after he disappeared in the front door, coatless, except as to his arms, before he walked calmly down the steps of a house on the opposite side of the street, dressed exactly as he had been dressed when he had appared before in the letter."

"You say that within three minutes after he went into the house you were watching, he came out of another house on the opposite side of the street—is that what you mean?" said Dill's slow, wondering question.

"That's it exactly."

"And you didn't see him cross the street?"

"No one crossed the street while he was inside," declared Amsdell.

Marston nodded his head decisively, and said:

"No one—not a soul."

"And what did Ralston Sprague do the second time he appeared?" asked Siddons.

"Nothing. We didn't give him time. We just grabbed him. He had on another coat body for our pains. We chased him half a square, but he was the game out of last and he managed to get in and slam the door in our faces. Of course it locked itself, and there we were outside, feeling like fools.

"I don't wonder," remarked Siddons, thinking of how unplused he and Dill had been that night. "What after that?"

"We were sort of dazed." It was about four minutes before we went down the steps. We had scarcely got out feet on the sidewalk, when Ralston Sprague, again dressed as before, came out of a drug store, about two hundred feet down the street, on the other side, and waved the hand at us with mock courtliness and shouted:

"'Good evening, gentlemen!'

"Then he went into a hallway beside the drug store. We knew it would be useless to chase him. We felt like farmers, but what could we do? We just came in here to get untwisted."

CHAPTER X.

A QUICK REVERSAL.

"Well, boys," commented Dill, "I don't wonder if you're twisted a little all that. I'm somewhat twisted myself and I guess Siddons is, too. Let us straighten out ourselves while Siddons and I go into the other room and talk things over."

As soon as the two detectives were alone, Dill said:

"Ralston Sprague gave them this letter at, say, o'clock, they said."

Siddons nodded.

"And that was about half an hour after that man disappeared from the telegraph pole."

"Just about."

"And as Sprague had to write that letter with the hands of our discomfiture there, it must have been to him that the young man in the brown derby was wiring."

"Nothing could be plainer."

"Well, this seems to be an up-to-date gang and it's about time to do a scientific fight, and pretty much all on one side at once."

"Will you meet Sprague, as he requests?"

"I don't know what to think."

"He don't want to see us silently."

"No; and I don't want his money."

"But when he is certain finally that he can't buy you he may wish to kill you."

"I know it," said Dill, dryly.

"But you might learn something by letting him talk."

"Yes, perhaps; but I don't expect to learn much. We don't want me to know."

"It seems to me anyhow," insinuated Siddons.

"Yes, if we can manage it."

"But we can, somehow. We're pitted against a big combination."

"I think so; but, surely, we're a match for what they can put up against us, if we can only get onto their methods. Dill said that was thoughtful.

"What do you suggest?" asked Siddons. "Let's sleep over it."

"All right."

"Come here at daylight in the morning, Siddons."

Siddons nodded and they went into the outer office and found Marston storing in his chair and Amsdell thinking intently.

"Let's all rest till tomorrow," said Dill. "Marston and Amsdell to come at seven in the morning and the four patrol for the night."

Dill sighed as he thought how fruitless their work had been thus far; but he soon slept and was conscious of nothing until he was awakened by a small alarm clock at his window.

He dressed hastily and went downstairs. He was about to open the front door when he heard some one insert a key in it from the outside.

He turned the gas very low and concealed himself behind the stairs at a point which commanded a good view of the front part of the hall.

Scarcely had he done so when the door opened noiselessly, and a man stepped inside and boldly turned up the gas.

The light fell on a face which brought a gasp of astonishment from the lips of the detective.

It was the face of Ralston Sprague.

The mysterious early caller locked the door after him, taking a sealed envelope from an inside pocket, held it nervously in his hand as he began silently to ascend the stairs.

"I have him now," gritted Dill.

As he spoke, the manhunter grasped his shooter.

Quickly taking aim at the intruder's head, he said in a low, even voice:

"Mr. Sprague, you may deliver that letter to me in person. No need to shove it under my door this time."

Ralston Sprague turned abruptly.

"One must needs submit when the devil drives," he said. "But why deliver the letter at all. We can now talk face to face."

"But not here," declared Dill, grimly, still covering his slippery captive with his revolver.

"No, outside?"

"No, in jail," Dill rejoined, sternly.

"You refuse to have me now, sure; but I was hoping you would listen to reason."

"My reason tells me to keep you safe now I have got you."

"If you are so foolish as this you will never run to earth the murderer of Brantford Morris."

"But I think I have taken a good step in that direction by capturing you."

"Capturing me, indeed. I meant what I said in my letter. You can have money and success."

"It will be only by downing you, Ralston Sprague, that I can ever win success in this case," dissented the detective. "I have caught you fairly—you got in this trap voluntarily—and I propose to take what advantage of the situation that comes in my way. Stand back!"

"You doubtless reason correctly from your point of view, but you are wrong. I can compel the man who murdered Brantford Morris to confess his crime."

"I have my doubts about that."

"You mean you doubt my sincerity—Yes."

"Then you won't have any kind of deal with me?"

"None."

"Then I must dance when you pull the string—there don't seem any other way open."

"Look like it," grunted Dill. "Go on out, but keep hold on your hands. I can't get my handcuffs on you and you and I won't get me up stairs anywhere to talk this matter out."

Sprague obeyed and Dill quickly searched him for weapons.

"Now, open the door and go out," the detective command ed. "Be safe if you obey, if you don't do that take big chances."

Ralston Sprague opened the door and stepped out into the dawn, closely followed by Dill.

As the detective emerged from the house he felt himself roughly struck of a revolver on either temple and knew that the enemy had triumphed.

"Ah!" laughed Ralston Sprague, "civility would have served you better."

CHAPTER XI.

WAS IT A TRICK?

Tenenay Siddons was at the office at daylight, according to appointment.

He waited an hour for Dill, then became impatient. He did not care to breed an engagement lightly, and the matter they had in hand was the most important one of their entire career.

Siddons went to Dill's lodgings and learned that Dill had got up very early and had not been seen by the landlady that morning.

As he was going away he met a certain Ellery Allen on the corner.

Mr. Ajrer, a roomer in the house with Dill, was a reporter, a young man with a real estate experience, who had been employed by Dill on occasion, and had once received a warm admiration for the well known detective.

Ajrer knew Siddons, and accosted him thus:

"Hush! Bad case!"

"What do you mean?"

"Abduction of Mr. Dill."

"Abduction!"

The word came from Siddons like an explosion.

"Yes; he was taken away this morning early."

"How long since?"

"Just daylight."

"Who took him?"

"I know. He's been out all night—was coming home. Saw Dill on front steps with three men—two of them holding guns to his head. Then—"

"Go on," urged Siddons, breathlessly.

"I got out of sight and watched."

"What did you see?"

"Saw them start. The three men made Dill go with them round the corner. They called a carriage and they made him get in with them."

"Which way did they go?"

"Every way and I went with them for awhile."

"What do you mean by that?"

"I jumped up behind and hung on, hoping to be able to get on to the whole game. They made a circle down them up and down and back and forth in every course and finally steered off north."

"North! And what then?"

"That's about all I know. One of the men in the carriage with Dill saw me about then and the first I knew of it they reached out through the rear of the carriage and pushed me into the street. I

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came down hard—fact is the wind was almost knocked out of me. By the time I got on my feet the whole outfit was out of sight.

"And then got lost the trail?"

"Yes, completely."

"Would you know these men if you should see them again?" asked Tuscray Siddons.

"Yes, two of them."

"Can you describe them?"

"Well, one was tall, the other was short; the man I wouldn't recognize again was of medium height."

"And what sort of a man was the tall one?"

"Thin-faced, big moustache, long nose, black eyes, dark looking and genteel chap."

"Ralston Sprague!" exclaimed Siddons, under his breath, "and the short man?"

Alger described the second man quite minutely, but Siddons did not remember having seen such a man.

"The other one making up the three I didn't see to the face," continued Alger, "for the reason that he walked on the side of Dill and Sprague and had his face turned the other way."

"Did you get the hackman's number?"

"Didn't think of that, and had no chance to do it anyway, but I'd know the rig."

"I suppose I can depend on your aid?"

"Sure, Mr. Siddons. I would do anything to help Dill. Been a friend to me more'n once."

"All right. Come to our office at 9 o'clock."

Siddons returned to the office and at seven Marston and Amsdell presented themselves as they had been requested to by Dill.

"Men," said Siddons, gloomily, yet energetically, "we're at a critical point in the worst fight we ever had. We are awfully outnumbered, by what I believe to be the strongest criminal organization ever put up and so far we have been outgeneraled and made monkeys of in a most ridiculous manner. Now, we are without our leader and we've his reserve to accomplish before we can turn our hands to anything else."

"What do you mean?" chorused Marston and Amsdell, breathlessly.

"Dill is a prisoner in the power of Ralston Sprague."

Siddons told them all he knew of Dill's capture by the crew, then added, slowly:

"Men, we must be up and doing. Our wits and our bodily strength must be consecrated to this work. Dill must be freed; then we must chase this syndicate of crime to its just doom, the gallows and the pen. We must show ourselves their masters. To do this we must resolve that the period or coming triumph is at an end. They by their cunning have invented new plans to go through our hands and are trying to discourage us by adding to mystify us. But what one man may originate another man may improve on and many other men may know. We must give ourselves to the task of getting to the heart of the mystery of the men who go up." It is a thing that appears almost miraculous, but I believe it is simple, and if we can master it we may possibly use it in the undoing of Ralston Sprague and his gang."

While Siddons had been speaking, Amsdell and Marston had ceased to eat their feed and in their excitement they had gradually approached him.

Now they seized his outstretched hand, Marston first, then Amsdell, and speaking together, they pledged themselves and all their energies to the work that had been outlined by Siddons.

"If it is in human power to free Dill, we will accomplish it," declared Siddons. "But how to go about it is the question. I——"

He was interrupted by the telephone bell. In an instant he was before the 'phone, receiver in hand.

"Who is it?" he asked.

"I—Dill," answered a voice.

"Stanley Dill?"

"Yes. I was made a prisoner by Sprague and his gang during the assault the voice of the man who called himself Stanley Dill threw strength into it for instant action.

"I will be there within an hour," he said, at length. "And I will come in disguise, so I shouldn't, some of Ralston Sprague's party might recognize me."

"Why disguise?" questioned the voice.

"Are you alone?" asked Siddons, cautiously.

"Yes."

"My tramp get up—Tired Tolliver, you know."

"All right. Come quick as you can."

Siddons' face lighted up with a new idea. "If you're really Dill," he said, "you've got me something that Dill and I were the only ones know and no one knows more."

The answer came back promptly:

"The man that was hanged years ago for the murder of Demas Burns was innocent."

Siddons started.

"There is only one man who knows that except Dill and myself," he soliloquized, "and that is the man who killed Demas Burns. This is a pretty sure thing, evidently, but they won't catch me carelessly done napping. I'll be wary—wary as a fox."

He shouted into the telephone:

"I'll be there within an hour. That's all."

He turned to Marston and Amsdell.

"I can't give you any special instructions and I must leave soon on a private mission. Alger will be here at eight to help in any way possible. You know you can depend on him. Question him and the three of you may get on to and out about that carriage and where it went. Meet me here at 9 o'clock, or you may have something important to communicate."

They nodded assent and he went hurriedly out.

The fact that he gave these instructions with after having received the message which purported to be from Stanley Dill was sufficient evidence that he did not consider his quest at an end and was resolved to leave no stone unturned and take no chance by delay.

In ten minutes he was in a low, sawdust-floored saloon not four blocks distant from his office.

"I want Funston," he said to the barkeeper.

"Asleep," and the barkeeper jerked his head in the direction of a side room.

Siddons aroused Funston abruptly and not gently.

"I want you," he said.

"Well, when you want me, you always get me, don't you?" And Funston rubbed his eyes with his knuckles.

"When I tell to get you when I want you, some one else gets you. You know who I mean, don't you, Funston?"

Funston shivered.

"Yes, I know," he mumbled. "No stone pile in mine."

"Well, there's no time for talk this morning. Come on!" and Funston followed him unquestioningly.

Funston looked wistfully at the bar and Siddons, half in pity, half in disgust, bought him a drink.

"He may need the nerve it'll give him," he thought. He watched Funston throw the big glass of cheap whisky into himself, then walked outside, Funston close at his heels.

They were soon in Siddons's room.

Siddons produced some tattered garments and some false whiskers.

"Funston," he said, "disguise yourself as a tramp and do it quick. I've worn these togs often and you're about my size, you know."

Funston laughed bitterly.

"What's the use of the disguise? Don't I look the part all right, all right? Yet once I faked with a circus and was a big star myself. I bowl sometimes yet, but I never swell any more, so that breaks up the combination."

He quickly donned the disguise and Siddons gave his features a deft touch and with some colors out of a make-up box.

"I'll do," he said.

"Yes, you'll do now. Here's money. Go just as fast as the cars will carry you to 1291 Russell street, ring the door bell and act according to circumstances."

"What am I up to, Siddons?"

"Nothing fatal. Keep your wits about you and you're not likely to come to any harm. I think I can trust you, Funston, not to tell any one there that you're not the real thing."

"I reckon you can," and the hobo leered knowingly. "I ain't at all anxious to revive that old workhouse combination. So long."

"Waste no time now, and when you can do what I've up and tell me all that may have happened to you on this trip. You know me well enough to know it always pays you to serve me faithfully."

Funston looked Siddons in the face and half whimpered:

"Yes, and I know you'd give it to me in bad shape if I should give you away."

"That's how you'd get it, Funston."

"I couldn't. I'll be your game this time, for I don't know it, see?"

"Then you get out. Where you're going."

"If I didn't know you to be dead square, Siddons, I wouldn't take up such an uncertain job as this."

"Go into the street and rush right along."

And Siddons pushed Funston gently out of the door.

"Well," he murmured when he was alone, "that's all probable that Funston will come to grief at this business. He is in good shape except for being a little near-sighted. He's a wary rogue and no one will want to do him any harm, but he's the only man on earth that could serve my purpose now. If it is really Dill who is there, Funston will come back and tell me. If it is not Dill it can be no one but the murderer of Demas Burns—a villain for whose crime another man was hanged."

He paused a moment, thinking, then went on:

"If Dill didn't telephone me the murderer of Demas Burns did, and Funston is the perfect counterpart of Demas Burns. I'd like to be there and see how the man that telephoned me will look and act when he sees Funston's face without the false whiskers. If he is Demas Burns' assassin he's likely to have a fit, and Funston will tell me about it some time."

The fascinating story of mystery will be continued in next week's Ledger. Our special serial subscription offer appears on pages thirteen and fourteen.

"What am I up to, Siddons?"

Hints on Running.

Probably the most talked-of athlete in amateur and collegiate athletic circles just now is Alvin C. Kraenzlein, of the University of Pennsylvania, who this spring made a new world's record in the running broad jump. Mr. Kraenzlein is generally admitted to be the greatest all-round track athlete in this country. Up to a year ago he was known only as a phenomenal hurdler, holding world's records for both the high and low hurdles. Mr. Kraenzlein has this to say regarding his wonderful powers as an athlete:

"From the time when I was a very small youngster I was very fond of athletic sports of all kinds, but at that time there were plenty of boys who could beat me in short and long-distance running. I determined to make a study of running, and become the fastest runner in the school. In the first place I read a number of hints given by trainers, and these I adopted as much as was possible. To begin with I was always careful to take care of myself, and never ruined my lungs with tobacco or my stomach with coffee every morning.

"My training at this time was very simple, but I think effective. Each morning and night I used to go through the setting up exercises that are used at West Point, which almost every one knows, and do some of my records, perhaps, may be due recently attributed to them. Gradually I began running and practicing until I was soon developed the fastest runner in the school, and I am sure that I felt more proud of this distinction than I have ever any of my records.

"If you are going to quote me as to my methods I won't answer where to begin, but first of all I would advise any young boy to take up athletics. That was all I did. And work together at all times. By this I mean that the true runner or jumper depends upon his head quite as much as his legs, for the fastest runner often gets beaten before the race begins. Another thing, you want to cultivate confidence in your ability to win. Go into the race with the idea of winning, and if you lose, have it because the other man outran you, and, what is more, admit it.

"This confidence you may be up to him in the future, and you will enjoy your victory more when you have won it by your own hard work. Begin your practicing by light running, allowing plenty of development for your lungs. Don't overdo yourself at the start, but try and build up a physique and acquire the muscle and stamina that can be relied upon when you are in a race. More races are lost from a bad stomach than poor legs. Add to this good American sand and faithful and conscientious practice and you may find yourself a world's champion some day."

True' Indeed.

"Alas!" exclaimed the heathen warrior, as the christian soldier's bayonet made its reappearance alongside his spine, "I am sorely pushed!"

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Recent Inventions.

Two Virginians have patented a cigar in which a leaf stem is inserted in the center to impart its fragrance to the smoke, the stem being withdrawn when the cigar is lighted, thus forming a passage for the smoke.

A Kentuckian has patented a piano hammer which has a flat strip of felt carried by a pair of curved fingers set in a tapering tube, with a nut at the end, and to tighten the fingers, the disk being turned around at the wood.

A Texan has patented a machine which will check nuts of any size or shape, consisting of two jaws suspended to permit of a vertical movement, which is obtained by a pair of cams operated by a lever at the side of the machine.

For use in assisting vehicles off car tracks a band is loosely mounted on the axle to carry an arm, which is raised and lowered by a lever near the seat, a shoe being fixed at the end of the arm to be dropped into the track and lift the wheel out.

An Englishman has designed a scalloped shoe for summer wear which has the upper formed of two pieces, with a filling cut to interlace short pieces at right angles, forming a loose lace-work, which admits air to the top and sides of the foot.

Fish can be caught without hooking in a new spring trap, consisting of a tray having a pair of spring-controlled jaws pivoted in the bottom, with a bait projecting over which springs the trap, the device being sunk to the bed of the stream.

Railroad and other cars are easily ventilated with an Arkansas man's device, a small wind wheel being set on top of the car to drive an exhaust fan mounted in an opening at the end of the car, the two fans being connected by a gear shaft.

Good at Figures.

"How many times did that fellow kiss you last night?"

"Do you want the official count, pa?"

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Preferred to Be Prepared.

He was a small 6-year-old, and he was stretched across his father's knee in the attitude traditional for punishment in the premises of sparing the rod.

"Papa!" he asked in the moment of silence before the slipper fell, "are you going to spank me?"

"Well, suppose I am. Why do you ask?"

"Because, papa," he replied with all the dignity possible under the circumstances, "I do not wish to be surprised."

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Dull Trade.

"How is Surlyupe getting on in the butcher business?"

"Very poorly, I hear. They say he does so little that he can't afford to kill more than half a cow at a time."

Parent of a Prodigy.

"What an amount of dignity Jones seems to have developed lately," remarked Brown. "He's going to throw up his job and try to get something better. He says there's no use of a man with his qualifications filling so menial a position. And he's always been such a meek, unassuming man, you know."

"Yes," replied Smith, "but I heard that his baby has just got so that it can say 'papa' so they can understand it."

Mean Man.

"Our old neighbor Jenkins is the meanest man I know."

"What has he done?"

"Why, you know, when we broke up housekeeping and undertook to sell all our household goods at auction he got into the house on the plea that he wanted to buy and then produced a writ of replevin and took away everything we had borrowed from him in the three years we have been neighbors."

An Awful Moment.

Dick—What should you say, Gus, was the most critical moment of your life?

Gus (pink-faced blonde, promptly)—Last Sunday afternoon, I had just finished a glass of chocolate ice-cream soda with my best girl when I felt in my pocket and found I had left my handkerchief at home. I was wearing light kid gloves, too.

Purely Offensive.

"I have been thinking over the matter for some time," said the Sultan of Turkey, "and have almost concluded to make an alliance with Spain—offensive and defensive, you know."

"Well," replied the Grand Vizier, "would it not be rather hard to tell which was the—ahem—the offensive member?"

Not Necessary to Throw It.

"You are not angry with me because I threw a kiss to you, are you?" he asked.

"Yes, I am," she replied.

"Why?" he inquired.

"Because there was no impenetrable barrier between us that made it necessary."

Betrayed Himself.

Nell—Did you meet Miss Gotrox's fiance?

Belle—Yes; he met Featherstone first.

How do you know?

He shakes your hand around in a circle as if you were an organ."

Not What He Wanted.

Nurse—It's time for your nourishment now, Mr. Peppery.

Mr. Peppery (who is convalescent)—Hang nourishment! What I want is something to eat.

Out of Place.

"Bob," chattered the sweet thing, "has a mania for silk stockings. She has silk stockings on the brain."

"Not the place," grunted the bachelor, whom they had overheard, "by no means."

At a Safe Distance.

Quizzo—Do you think Featherhead follows the Golden Rule in his daily life as he professes to do?

Bizzo—Yes, but I think he keeps as far behind it as he can.

The Limit of His Ability.

Querious—Do you write successful songs?

Mawkins—No, they're beyond me. I can only write songs that the critics praise.

Sure Method.

Browne—How can I get in close touch with the world?

Towne—Get a bicycle.

There Are Others.

"He has very decided views, hasn't he?"

"Yes; they are decided by his wife."

"How does he make his home attractive?"

"By staying away from it."

Higher Imperialism.

"Yes," said St. Peter, "this is heaven. The lower world, indeed, is an inconceivable distance from here. We have no intercourse with the place whatever."

"It doesn't make any difference how far away the place is," replied the recently arrived shade, "I know enough about the principles of humanity and 'manifest destiny' to say that I'm right in for annexing it."

Canine Talk.

"Do you ever use slang?"

"Well, very seldom, but I couldn't help saying dog-gone when the butcher caught me little brudder."

Enriched.

"Oh, the people in our village all thought they'd be made rich when the trolley line was built out here."

"Were they disappointed?"

"Mostly. Only six persons all told have been run over and settled with by the company so far."

Then the Talk Languished.

Stranger (who has been out between every act at theater)—Those high theater hats are a great nuisance.

His Next Neighbor—Well, I don't know that they are any more of a nuisance than those broad theater breaths.

Compensation.

"It must have been a terrible shock to lose all your fortune," said the sympathizing friend.

"Well, yes," said the ex-plutocrat, "but, anyway, I don't have to pretend to like olives any more."

A Sad Case.

Jack—What's the matter with Reggy?

Cholly—Concussion of the brain. He was at the ball game the other day when some wuffian sitting above him dropped a score-card on his head.

Of Course.

Dimling—Did the president say anything during the interview?

Allson—Not a word.

Dimling—And Mark Hanna?

Allson—Didn't I just tell you?

He Got Even.

She—I wouldn't marry you if you were the last man on earth.

He—You wouldn't get a chance. I'd surely have my pick then.

The Hatchways of Poetry.

He—What's a quantity of poetry Mrs. Pussy Quickfoot turns out?

She—Yes. She reminds me of an industrious hen. Not a day without its lay.

Just a Glimpse.

Papa—By the way, who is the lady that I noticed you with as we left the carriage?

Dorothy—The one with the black silk skirt, the rose petticoat, plaid silk waist, purple collarette with silver cuspe, tan coat, black hat with purple tips, carrying a silver-trimmed card case?

Papa—Yes.

Dorothy—I don't know; I just caught a glimpse of her.

His Business-Like Way.

"I reckonize young Jim Rush is a feller that'll always git along," remarked Farmer Hornbeak, as he reached behind the kitchen door for the bootjack.

"What makes you think so, Ezry?" asked his good wife.

"Why, he was married last night to Miss Jenny Trueworthy, and this mornin' I see he's got a placard nailed on his gatepost which says 'No cards, no cake, and nobody's business.'"

The First Time It Was Said.

Eve to Adam as dinner was being served on the day of her creation—Shall I dress the salad, Adam?

Adam—No; I'll attend to that. If there is one thing I can do, it is to dress salad to perfection.

Got Off Easily.

"When I asked for a raise I told my employer I had grown gray in his service."

"What did he say?"

"He said if I had worked anywhere else I probably would have got bald."

Drama.

"How are you getting on with your play, old man?"

"Passably. I have it written out in French, but of course the translating and adapting is what really counts."

His Success.

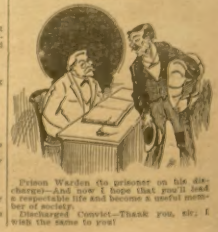
Friend—I understand that you scored a tremendous triumph on the stage!

Walker Far (the tragedian)—Yes, I got every dollar of my salary.

Pretty Good at Shakes.

Hewitt—That girl is no great shakes.

Jewett—Well, she shook me all right.



Prison Warden (to prisoner on his discharge)—And now I hope that you'll lead a respectable life and become a useful member of society.

Discharged Convict—Thank you, sir; I wish the same to you!

WASTED LANGUAGE AT THE SWELL SUPPER.

Mr. Swells—Kin I sittin yo' a little ice o' some kind, Miss Ivory?

Miss Gobbler—Ice? What does yo' tock me fo', a frigerator? What does I want wif ice? Git me some o' dat ice cream an' two pickled pig's feet.

STORYETTES.

MR. BOWSER'S TROUBLES.

Mr. Bowser had finished his after-dinner cigar and his evening paper, when Mrs. Bowser glanced at him to find a look on his face which plainly signified that he had something on his mind. She maintained silence, however, and it was five minutes later that he said:

"I was telling Brown, over at the office, about my rheumatism, and, do you know what he advised?"

"But when have you had rheumatism?" she asked.

"When? When? Well, that's pretty cool, when you know that I've had to hobble about like a lame hen for a year past? Both of my legs seem to be tied up in knots tonight, and I can hardly raise my arm to my collar. Nothing but my will power has kept me on my feet for the last six months."

"It's curious that you never mentioned it to me."

"Nothing curious about it. I've simply dosed and rubbed and tried to get rid of it without any fuss. A woman has a cold in her head she'll let everybody for a mile around know all about it, but a man may have a thousand pains and keep the fortune all to himself. I've had to complain. If I set here dying I shouldn't say anything to you about it."

"Well, what did Brown advise?" asked Mrs. Bowser, knowing that some new fad had been put forward.

"The same remedy that cured him. He had rheumatism for twenty-seven years, and paid out $11,000 without finding relief, and he was then cured in ten days."

"Wonderful!" gasped Mrs. Bowser. "I suppose it will be in the papers—a full-page testimonial?"

A SIMPLE REMEDY.

"And I suppose it won't!" snapped Mr. Bowser. "Brown didn't cure himself with a patent medicine, and he's no hand to blow around. In fact, if we had'nt been close friends, I'd never have known of his cure. And all he did was to go out into his own back yard in his bare feet of a dewy night. It's what they call the barefoot cure."

"And are you going to try it?"

"I am. I'm going to it right off, now. Ten nights will work a perfect cure. All I've got to do is to parade around on the dewy grass for fifteen minutes at a time."

"And you really believe in such nonsense?" she exclaimed, as he began removing his shoes and stockings. "If anybody had told me that at 47 years old I would——"

"There you go!" he interrupted, as he got one foot bared. "Did I ever make a move to cramp my health that you didn't oppose me? Here is a thing that has been tried by thousands and effected a cure in every case, and yet you call it nonsense. I know you'd ridicule it as a matter of course, but that will not change my purpose."

Mr. Bowser had nothing more to say and Mrs. Bowser removed the other shoe and stocking and rolled up the bottom of his trousers and was ready to go out. He hesitated for minutes to give her a chance to make further remarks, but as none came he descended to the kitchen and passed out of the back door. He was out for the dew, and he proceeded to look for it. Pelting his arms and keeping his head well up he began promenading back and forth the length of the yard and it wasn't five minutes before he imagined that he was already feeling better. Mrs. Bowser came and looked out of the window at him and as he caught her smile he grew her a chance to make further remarks, but as none came he descended to the kitchen and passed out of the back door. He was out for the dew, and he proceeded to look for it. Pelting his arms and keeping his head well up he began promenading back and forth the length of the yard and it wasn't five minutes before he imagined that he was already feeling better. Mrs. Bowser came and looked out of the window at him and as he caught her smile he grew bolder.

"Oh, yes. She calls it another of my fads and is giggling away to herself," was her giggle. Ten nights of it and I'll be able to jump a five-rail fence."

AN UNEXPECTED FEATURE.

He turned to march back and as he did so he gave his right foot a scrape to scoop in an extra amount of dew. The scrape was only half-contemplated when the watching Mrs. Bowser saw him jump a hour later when he opened his eyes and found himself lying on his back on the sitting room floor, while the two women rubbing his hands and chafing his hands and holding various sorts of liquids under his nose.

"Woman!" he exclaimed, as he made out the situation, "woman, this dastardly attempt on my life—this——"

"Are you conscious?" interrupted Mrs. Bowser.

"Of course I'm conscious, and I want to tell you that your murderous intentions——"

"Then you'd better go to bed, dear upstairs, Mr. Bowser, and I'll send for the doctor. You've got about 40 digs and scratches on your feet and legs and a lump as big as a goose egg on the back of your head, and it seems to me that you've been telescoped together and made two feet shorter. Just keep quiet, now. I think your rheumatism is permanently cured, but if you get excited your life may pay the forfeit. That's the way—crawl along on your hands and knees, and we won't say anything to the doctor about the dew cure. Come, we'll just tell him that you fell off the roof and struck a nest of bumble bees and feel in need of a spring tonic."

"HE UTTERED A FRESH YELL EVERY SECOND."

He Dropped the Canyon Story.

W. E. Curtis, in one of his southwestern letters, tells about Capt. Hance, a famous frontiersman and yarn-spinner, who lives on the verge of the grand canyon of the Colorado. Capt. Hance used to claim that he built the canyon; that he dug it out all above by himself when he was a boy; that he loved to work in the dirt. Some geologists did not furnish an adequate field for his energy, so he came to Arizona and began his hand in making a canyon. But he didn't make it any deeper.

A year or two ago a little girl came to the canyon and looked at it with eyes and mouth and ears open to the stupendous proportions related by Capt. Hance, and when he had finished he asked her opinion of the party to which she belonged how he had managed to dig it, and the child exclaimed indignantly:

"I don't believe a word of it."

"My dear," responded Capt. Hance, reproachfully, "don't you believe that I dug the canyon?"

"If you dug it," replied this ardent skeptic, "what did you do with the dirt?"

For once in his life Capt. Hance was silent and says he has never told that story since.

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THE COURTS ON TRUSTS.

The courts disagree in the interpretation of law and sound public policy as related to the trust question. Recently the New Jersey supreme court refused to interfere with the enforcement of a trust agreement. Now the Indiana supreme court has decided that corporations entering into agreements relative to prices and the control of trade are in danger of having their charters forfeited.

The Indiana decision grew out of the action of two companies organized for the piping of gas and oil. The two companies entered into an agreement to maintain a certain price, and neither was to furnish gas to a consumer who was the patron of the other. A suit to forfeit the charters of both companies on the ground that they were engaged in an unlawful combination was unsuccessful in the lower court, but was sustained before the higher tribunal.

The New Jersey decision was given in a case brought by the New York Sugar Refining company against Brown & Fleming. This firm, with other owners of quarries, entered into an agreement to control the price and output of stone. One condition of the agreement was that a single agent was to do the selling for all the firms, with a $5,000 penalty for not observing this condition. Brown & Fleming, becoming dissatisfied, decided to oppose the trust, and began to undersell their own account. Suit was brought to collect the $5,000 forfeiture for violation of agreement. Brown & Fleming filed a demurrer that the plaintiff, by its own statement, was a trust formed for the purpose of preventing competition and controlling prices. The demurrer was overruled, the court holding that a contract that a single person shall be employed as the sole agent of the manufacturers to sell all their output does not violate any principle of law and may be enforced.

The decision of the New Jersey court seems to be a departure from the usual attitude toward combinations for controlling prices and output. However, even the Indiana decision will not be found a very effective weapon, for most of the latter-day trusts have been organized in such a way as to make them technically lawful according to the ruling of the court. Instead of entering into agreement, the common method of trust promotion now is to have the companies transfer their property to a single gigantic corporation organized for the purpose. The Indiana decision does, however, indicate one way to control the trusts, with proper legislation, and that is through restrictions upon the grant of corporate powers.

The man who owns a paste diamond isn't necessarily an Irishman just because he wears a sham-rock.

THEIR PRISON-HOUSE.

BY E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM.

He was pale-faced, round-shouldered and anæmic, a creature obviously deficient in vitality, with the half-mark of servitude stamped very clearly upon his commonplace features, and the pathos of Job shining in his hollow-set brown eyes. In every respect he was entirely out of touch with his environment; one could only wonder what had brought him so far from his accustomed haunts. His shabby yet respectable black clothes, his well-frayed linen, and the ink-stains still lingering upon his finger-nails—these things bespoke his occupation as plainly as though he had stood there among the chicken with a ledger under his arm and a pen behind his ear.

For by some strange chance he had wandered far from the city, and found his way into a very world of sunshine; over his head it came streaming through the delicate interlacings of those gently waving green elm-leaves—a rich golden flood, warm, yet very soft and sweet, there in the deep shade. He had thrown himself, after a moment's silent absorption, upon a grassy bank; his limbs stretched out over the mossy earth, his recumbent form in very personification of absolute yet awkward ease. His eyes began slowly to blink, then to close; the murmurous drone of bees at work made him sleepy. It was really the country into which he had wandered—the dear birds and insects everywhere, as well as wild flowers and stunted trees. Unconsciously he was all alive with them. Just now a humble bee had buzzed heavily against his stiff blade of grass yonder—hear him now, buzzing away in the bracken behind; what a lazy, sensuous sound it was! Then a tortoiseshell butterfly came floating in from the flower-laden hedge that bounded the cornfield, and a beetle whose curved shell-like back was as black as polished jet, crawled from behind that piece of gray boulder. Then a grasshopper commenced his inharmonious wrestle. To one born in the country those are all common things—things that come to a city clerk as compelling-house machine whose life had been spent upon an island in the midst of walls—were ever upon the stone pavements of a Babylonic wilderness—as to a stranger all new and full of wonder. It was many a year since he had seen a tortoiseshell butterfly or a black, shelly, shining beetle. Then a sudden thrill, a quick, conscious throbbing of his own more musical note. And when all—how bright and beautiful—combined! Was the sky over-vastly so since as that over Tooting? Were the clouds—how white! and those little fleecy, white clouds—surely they never floated like that over Bermondsey! And the sun—how it poured down the soft music of the sea, came the gentle rushing of the fir-trees, and, mingling amongst the bending corn, whose tops were full in ripening, the eyes closed of their own accord, he could not keep them open any longer; a sort of Nirvana of rest, tender and sweet, took its brain, a day-sleep from which he was suddenly awakened by the sharp snapping of a twig close behind. He sat up, vaguely alarmed! Yonder, in the lowest fork of the tree, was the cause of his disturber of his dreaminess. It was—yes, he decided that it must be a squirrel. He had never seen one there before, but it could be nothing else. What bright little black eyes, and what a big tail! He looked on into the deeper recesses of the thick-leaved branches, hoping for a further glimpse of the disappearance and sighed.

He was conscious of beginning to feel lonely. He drew out his watch, a tinny worn Waterbury, with a little blue glass attached, and he knew. Surely she would not be long now! He was impatient to see her again, to walk with her, to feel once more the old wonderful morning. Looking! He was not supposed to look without it for these few halcyon days; they would so soon be over, and then he would know when they would come again! For the door of his prison house had been unbarred, and he was for one short week only but a whim of Mr. Rupert's to lend his uncle's clerk the use of his country villa and to insist upon a week's holiday for him! Good-natured? Oh, yes, and without question well-bred; but, all the same, it was a whim. The man fell to wondering—to wondering wherein had come to him this unexpected kindness. For years Mr. Rupert, junior partner in the firm, had passed without his respectful "Good-morning." What had made him so suddenly and without question who offer this strange kindness? The man's brain had grown misty through long years of mechanical work. There was something there—a thought without substance, or was it a fear? He pressed his hand to his head and sighed.

He stood up to look for her, drawing in, as he clambered a few yards higher up the hillside, a long breath of the sweet, fresh air perfumed—the scent of sun-warmed heather, carried on the bosom of a south wind. Yonder through the trees he could see purple streaks of it upon the downs, and here and there clumps of yellow gorse, stretching right to the borders of that dark belt of pine woods; it was all very beautiful.

Would she come soon, he wondered? He wanted her to see the squirrel, and to them with him to that low music from the cornfield. He knew how she loved all these strange country sounds and sights, and he grudged every moment that she was not there with him enjoying them. What could she be doing, he wondered, to keep her so long; he sighed as he remembered what a conscientious pleasure she seemed to take in keeping that strange little thatched cottage, with its red tiles and queer diamond-framed windows, as neat and trim as she sometimes managed to keep their six-roomed "villa" in Bermondsey! Only here there was something to reward her for her pains —their own little home, alas! at its best was miserably, depressingly ugly. A wave of bitterness rose up from the bottom of the man's heart; the cruel injustice that done him the unkindness of loosening for a moment the bonds of his shackledom. The scales dropped from his eyes; he stood face to face with his misery, and thought of their home, his and hers. It was in a hot, dirty back street, close to the river, and opposite a piece of waste ground, where squalid children made a weary pretense at play, and where the filth and rubbish of generations seemed to have accumulated. Twenty-nine shillings a week will not go very far in London—and there were the debts to pay off. Never mind how they had been incurred, they had been incurred. If it had been only himself—well, he could have borne all this and more; for nature had given to him some touch of that marvelous unselfishness which sends many a man tottering through the world with a patience almost Christlike, and the burdens of other people's sins bowed upon his shoulders. But there was Edith! She had been used to comforts and luxuries which almost meant her for a drudge! She read poetry—how he wished that he could understand it! and talked of Art in London! Ah, if only he could get them for her! Sometimes he had seen her with a shadow of pain on her little front room, and shiver from head to foot as she looked out upon the dirty, foul street to the desolation beyond. He wondered—what a black, chill thought, had he caught in such a moment? Had he ever stood how miserable a creature a city clerk is, and what poor hopeless, helpless, limitations, how slowly, shilling by shilling, his wages creep up, as his hair grows grey, and his figure more bent? If God would only have mercy instead of His own wretched smatterings of brain power! He saw himself suddenly as he was, saw whither he was shooting—the deadness of his faint shadow of manhood, the closing in of the iron fingers which were soon to be at his throat; it was a moment of rare revolt. Then the sunshine, the same old music, the cycle of work day by day, the same walk home, the dreary tea with Edith! The daily pitiful struggle for respectability with his rusty black clothes, patched and mended, and always that dreadful bare of shilling. Every day had been hammered into him the necessity of economy of the day that preceded and the day that followed it. Life was becoming unendurably monotonous; it is habit which crushes. Did she understand these things, he wondered? God only knew! Every day was the same, the same dreadfully

But when the daylight came he was himself again. With white face and leaden eyes he prepared for his daily slavery in the same slow, mechanical fashion. He made the usual remarks—he kept a little stock of them—and she answered him in the same spirit. But it was seldom that their eyes met, for the shadow was always there. She, too, he thought, seemed to be growing thinner; she read less poetry, she was always looking out with dull eyes upon a hopeless future; yet she was struggling bravely to do her duty. Every day there was a faint, wan smile, the usual inquiry as to the day's work, the weather, some other trifling word obviously prepared beforehand; and he answered her with rigid calm as he hung up his coat after carefully removing the dust from it, and exchanging it for a still shabbier garment. Sometimes they took a weary little walk, mostly on Sundays, along an endless succession of ugly streets, hounded by squalid houses, or dreary shuttered shops. There was no escape from their environment, for he had no money for buses, and she was not strong enough to walk far. The pavements burned their feet, and their eyes were sore at the wilderness of bricks and mortar, the throngs of hideously dressed, ill-mannered neighbors, the utter absence of all things beautiful. The whole panorama was a nightmare to them. They were deep down in the hell of the poverty-stricken, and together—the man thought sometimes in those long watches of the night—together they could never escape from it. He had no increase of salary to hope for; if he had dared to ask for it there were hundreds clamoring for his bread. He would be lucky, as old age came on, if he could keep his place. For him there was no climbing out—no escape. But for her! How long would she suffer? God only knew!! Sometimes he thought that he must cry out and ask her, but the shadow was there, and he dared not. They were walking together within its dark folds, and his tongue was palsied.

Now and then, very seldom, for he was a great sportsman, Rupert Denning came to the office. He passed the white, stooping figure who never looked up at his entrance with a greeting half-contemptuous, half-pitying. Once, however, he called him into his private office. It was a day when the man was fidgeting even than usual. All night long he had lain awake, and this morning there was a livid shade in his face, and his eyes were leaden. His collar was more badly frayed than ever, and his shirt—he was bound to make it last three days—was very soiled. With his block in his hand, he took down dictation slowly without error, a letter from the young man's dictation. In the midst of it there came a pause. After a while he raised his eyes; Mr. Rupert was doing him the honor to observe him closely. His lips were slightly curled, his eyes spoke of that pity which is much akin to contempt. The clerk knew well of what his master was thinking; he was wondering what made he, the pushing cad, had used to win a lady for his wife. Ah! well, it was simple magic after all. He had married her dying father; night after night they two had sat with him alone, watching and tending him through an illness from which all the neighbors had fled away in horror. His savings for five years had gone to bury that poor old man—a stranger, a fellow-lodger by chance. And there were other matters, but they were not important. Rupert Denning knew none of these things, and he might well wonder. The eyes of the two men met across the table. He was a man of the modern world, devoted to the acquisition of new sensations, absolutely without self-consciousness. The light in a poor clerk's eyes had no meaning for him; yet he was dimly made to feel the presence of something almost resembling dignity in that motionless, shadowy figure, waiting so patiently at his elbow. He coughed, and finished the dictation of his letter.

That night the man walked home a little more slowly than usual. He dreaded increasing pain in his head, and strange light before his eyes. He said nothing to the woman, and found her in the same room at the customary hour. But while she slept a strange change came over her. He raised himself in the bed. Ah, what a change! It was true, then! Her beauty, the rose and carnation was awake in the cornsilk, and the whole world outside the wood where he was lying was flooded with the golden sunlight! He laughed softly to himself with joy. See, there was a shaft of light at his feet, across the brown ant-heap and that little clump of purple foxglove! See how they were working round the honeysuckle; the air was pure with the buzz of their wings! He was watching a beetle now; he was a dull, unlovely insect enough, but he was creeping toward that line of sunlight. Now he had reached it. What a mighty change! His wing-cases gleamed! They were like burnished copper; he had suddenly become a beautiful thing! And here came his friend the squirrel! He had found some nuts in a bush yonder; but stay, was the man wondered, holding his burning head and staring steadily in front of him, was she sitting at the foot of the bed? and why did he look so solemn? What was that through the tree? The gleam of a white dress—two figures! He listened to their voices! What was he asking her?

"Why did you marry him?"

The man moaned; there was a pain at his heart. He was on fire! What was he doing? He would wake Edith; he could not help it. The daughter would come! He waved his arms. Noble little linnet, sing away sing aloud! If only he could catch that squirrel, Edith would like it so! She was out on the bough. She was trying to make him lie down; it was too bad, but he could not help laughing; how his sides ached! Her face was as white as death—she was frightened. What was she saying at the gate? The parson—new machines! that is what he was! Never mind, the fires were in his brain. He was free, free!

* * * * * * *

Once more their voices! The man was too weak to move. He lay still and looked out into the room; Rupert Denning was standing in the doorway with a great basket of flowers and a box under his arm. She had risen—I was looking at him, I thought—I must tell her—Edith is not to receive any one into her, Mrs. Spurgeman," he said. "We are all so glad to hear that the doctor gives you some hope after all. May I come in for a moment?"

She did not answer him at once, but he came in and closed the door after him.

"You are quite worn out," he continued, looking at her tenderly. "It is really too bad of you! I insist that you let me send you a nurse; it will be a pleasure to me to be allowed to serve you in any way."

The woman rose up and spoke.

"I thank you, Mr. Denning, but no one else shall nurse my husband."

He shrugged his shoulders.

"It must be as you will, of course! At least you will accept some flowers from me, and these grapes?"

"I am very much obliged," she answered, "but I already have all the flowers the doctor will permit in the room, and plenty of fruit."

The sick man slowly turned his eyes, the table by his side was smothered with beautiful roses; one great red blossom had become detached and was lying upon his pillow. There was a bowl, too, full of such as he had never seen before. He was bewildered; where did they come from

He took her face between his hands.

if not from him? He, too, had seen them with surprise.

"You are very hard upon me," he said, slowly; "why do you keep up such a farce? I have given you happiness. To give you pleasure, to atone for some of your past sufferings is my greatest wish."

The man closed his eyes, the smothered groan which escaped from his lips was too faint a sound for them to hear.

"The only possible manner," the woman said, "in which you can ever pay being ness is to never let me see your face again. Leave before you get worse. I tell you, you and your partner would have been his murderers. There are things in this world which I do not understand. People seem to accept them calmly, so I suppose they are right; but I am not one of them. You reap wealth from his labors and the labor of his widowed, and you keep him like that—half-starved. While you are making a fortune you raise his salary grudgingly, shilling by shilling, like a prize-fighter in the wheel! Oh, it is abominable!"

Rupert Denning sat quite unmoved.

"He had as much as he was worth, there are thousands who would have taken his place."

"Some day," she answered, scornfully, "those thousands may be your judges! What is wrong I do not know. I have not studied these things before, and I am an ignorant woman! But if there is a God above us, there will be a balance struck; some day between you and them."

Edith!"

She stopped him passionately.

"Oh, don't dare to call me by that name! One for God's sake, I tell you! Let me go—let me go! God knows I meant no harm! If I have sinned, I have suffered it a thousandfold, for he overheard, and he said nothing! He knew me and the misery of our life here which drove him mad. I have wronged him every moment. When I thought that he was content, and dozed him for it, he was suffering cruelly. You gave him—what was it?—twenty-nine shillings a week! He let me think it was more; he starved himself day by day for my sake. Oh! he has been a hero, and I thank God that he will never darken your doors again!"

He laughed unpleasantly as he prepared to go.

"Who one else will want him!"

The woman lifted up her head proudly.

"I shall want him! I could cry with joy when I think that at last I can repay a little a devotion which rich men such as you could never understand. I have been left money—not a fortune, but enough to keep us, wherever we choose to live."

He looked at her thoughtfully. She was thin and haggard, but she was wonderfully beautiful.

"You are romantic," he said, "but you cannot make him anything save what he is, you can never be happy with him."

Then the man who lay upon the bed saw that she was trembling from head to foot with passion. Her cheeks were scarlet and her eyes flashed fire.

"Oh, you poor fool!" she cried. "haven't you the wit to see that I love him—that I am his wife—his true friend! How dare you—"

And with that he went; and the woman, coming softly to the bedside, found the man's eyes open, and knew that he had been spared to her. She fell on her knees, and his thin wasted arms drew her face down to his; and in that moment the doors of their prison-house stood open!

Blue Dog Vs. Yaller Pup.

"I understand you are having a county seat war here," said the traveling man.

"We've got holdin' now. We're goin' to settle it by arbitration."

"Isn't that rather an unusual method in politics?"

"I, yes, it is, but then yer see we was goin' ter settle it by shootin'. If we killed off too many of the population some other town would git ahead of both of us, so we agreed to leave it to Colonel Jeff Thomas of Blue Dog an' Major Jim Wilson of Yaller Pup."

"They are the arbitrators?"

"Yep. They gotter git ter meet down by the creek this afternoon an' arbitrate the matter with a couple of shotguns."

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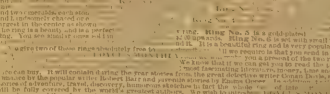

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AMONG THE COUNTERFEITERS.

Loston Swamp Island---Thrilling Perils in the Woods---The Boy Heroes of the Clam River.

By J. W. MERRILL.
(Copyrighted 1899.)

SYNOPSIS

Nevin Tithsm and Keith Kimberly, two adventurous lads, go hunting and get lost on an island among the swamps. They are attacked by a dog, which Keith kills with his rifle. A girl appears and attacks them for killing her four-footed companion. Finally the lost boys go with her to her home, a log house in a clearing. Mrs. Dampers, the woman in charge, seems greatly disturbed. That night the boys are put in the loft of the rude dwelling and Dampers prepares to kill them. They drop from a window and escape into the woods. Dampers, rifle in hand, searches for them. They elude Dampers and spend the night in the woods. Keith discovers a man in the morning and follows him. They come to another cabin on solid ground in the swamp. Keith asks for food. While at the house Keith's rifle is stolen. In attempting to find it Nevin is captured and finds a great heap of new silver dollars. The truth flashes on him that they are in the clutches of counterfeiters. Mr. Torchet, the man who lives in the cabin, tries to kill Keith after the boy's dangerous discovery. Keith is rescued by Nevin.

CHAPTER XIII.

A STRUGGLE IN THE DARK.

A very much frightened girl confronted Keith as he crossed the threshold of the next room. Her eyes were dilated and she could suppress her fright sufficiently to speak. Meantime she clung to the arm of her boy friend and moaned piteously.

"Now do be calm, Miss June," urged Keith. "You're perfectly safe; nobody shall harm you."

"I see a face there in the moonlight, at the window," explained the frightened girl the moment she could control her voice. Keith glanced at the window through which the moonlight streamed. He saw only rich webs and shadowy outlines of the forest foliage beyond.

"It was only a bad dream, June," he said, soothingly.

"No, don't say that. 'If you won't believe what I tell you I shan't say another word. I saw the wide awake, white face was pressed against the glass. He had such an awful look it scared me most to death. Do you think he will try to take me back? If he does, he may beat me again, or—do kill me? But I don't want to back again, ever!"

"Who was it, June?"

"My father. He is terribly angry; he means to kill me, I know he does," cried the shuddering girl, clinging more closely to her protector.

Just far away stood Nevin, his thin form looking uncanny in the moonlight. He had heard every word uttered by June and became scarcely less agitated than she.

"Old Dampers again, I suppose," the boy while his hands closed tightly about the gun he had snatched from the ground. "I'll just step out and investigate.

And then Nevin hurried from the place. Pausing outside the window, he drew the hammer of his weapon and peered sharply about on every side, determined should an enemy appear, not to be caught napping. It was without fear that the thin boy began a search of the premises. He knew that he made a plain mark in the moonlight for the benefit of an ambushed foe, and after skirting the old ruin, darted to the cover of a nearby thicket.

He now breathed easier. He occupied a position in which he could get an unobstructed view of the window against which the face that frightened little June had been pressed.

"If old Dampers shows himself," muttered the boy, "I'll creep out and capture him. He may have friends along—and he may all be a dream."

This latter notion became dominant when the lad saw no signs of life in the little opening. Tiring at length of vigil, Nevin set out to explore the woods in the immediate vicinity of the shanty. He moved with caution, having a wholesome fear of an ambuscade.

"No use in looking further," he decided, at length. 'June didn't see a thing. She dreamed it all, and I am going back to the shanty and take another snooze."

Turning about, he started toward the shanty. As he stepped into an old wagon road where the moonlight fell about him, a man darted from the bushes directly upon him. Hands seized the gun and attempted to wrench it from the boy's grasp. Nevin realized his danger on the instant, and clung with the strength of desperation to his gun. Should the man who had sprung upon him succeed in his desperate intent, Nevin felt that his life would pay the forfeit.

"Give me the gun, you young vagabond!" The words were hotly uttered in the ear of Nevin. The boy clung with desperation. Back and forth across the road boy and man struggled for possession of the gun.

Panting, sweating, tugging! Down they plunge at length, and then—crack! A bright flash and the report rings out. The combatants fall apart. One writhes and groans, and does not rise.

"You have killed me, boy!"

Finding himself free, Nevin, still clutching his gun, ran swiftly toward the shanty. Keith met him at the door.

"I heard a shot," cried the latter quickly.

"Yes; I've killed him, I guess," panted Nevin.

"Killed him—"

"Yes, yes. Come quickly, Keith! He lies out in the old road yonder."

The two boys hastened to the spot where Nevin's assailant lay groaning. They raised him with care and bore him to the house and placed him upon a bed. Here was there, quite too badly frightened to think of sleeping any more that night.

Depositing the wounded man on the ground near the fireplace the boys began at once to replenish the fire. When the light gleamed up, filling the room, the face of the wounded man was plainly revealed. No surprise was manifested when they recognized Timothy Dampers. The face was deathly pale, and there were spots of blood upon it which gave it a most ghastly expression.

Nevin was completely unnerved, and refused to go near, or even look at the wounded man. Keith, though very much perturbed, realized the necessity for immediate action, and went to the side of the boy and knelt down.

"Water, June, for me!" gasped the man faintly.

"Oh, no. I guess not," said Keith, who with trembling fingers pulled open the coat of Dampers to get at the wound. The movement served to reveal a ragged wound in the right shoulder. It did not appear to be the boy to be especially mortal although it was bleeding profusely. He used his handkerchief to stanch the flow of blood. He succeeded in doing this after a time, then placed his coat under the man's head and made him as comfortable as possible under the circumstances.

"You're worth two dead men, yet, Mr. Dampers," said the stout lad cheerily, much relieved to know that all immediate danger was over.

The settler closed his eyes and lay very still for a time. Keith sat by the fire and watched the wounded man's white face. It looked to the boy like a reveal a person that the girl shuddered. However much she feared him she yet felt a degree of affection for her father, and it grieved her to the heart to see him lying there so white and still.

The boys stood at one side, conversing in low tones, for they did not care to be out of sight of him for a moment of seeing a face at the window now. She had seen her father, and he was now past all power to do them or the little girl an injury.

"He may have companions," suggested Nevin.

"If he has why don't they show up?" said Keith.

"Only because they fear the consequences, I suppose. Why not question Dampers, Keith? I don't see why we are in the least danger of being pounced upon at any moment."

"He may be too weak to talk."

"Try him, anyhow."

All right, I will."

Keith stepped to the side of the wounded man, who seemed to be sleeping. Kneeling at his side the boy touched his hand lightly.

"The name of the wounded man is—"

"I wish to ask you a question, Mr. Dampers," said Keith. "Did you have any companions tonight?"

"No."

"Where are your friends, Bangs and Torchet?"

"Can't say. We got separated early in the day."

"Were you hunting for us?"

"Yes. That is—for—my girl, June. Where is she? Tell her to come to me, will you?"

Keith had no need to call the girl. She had crept forward the moment her father began to speak, and stood now at the elbow of her boy friend.

"Father," uttered June, falling on her knees at the side of the wounded man. She kissed his pale lips and began to weep softly. Keith arose at once and stepped aside.

"I am going to die, June, and it is you who have killed me," the boy heard Dampers say as he walked away. Keith plucked his chum's sleeve and requested him to follow. He led the way to the open air. Once here he said:

"There's going to be a scene and I had rather not witness it. June feels awful over the shooting."

"Do you think it was my fault, Keith?"

"Certainly not. From what you tell me you had a very narrow escape. And then, too, it may have been Dampers who fired the gun. However the wound may result, you are blameless, Nevin."

"I am glad to hear you say that, Keith. I wouldn't have that man's blood on my hands for the world. I expect June'll hate me when he lays the shooting to me."

At this moment a low voice called the name of Keith. It was June, who had come noiselessly to the door. The boys turned and approached.

"Poor papa fears he's going to die," said she, falteringly, "and—and he wants one or both of you boys to go for a doctor."

"Good lands!" ejaculated Nevin, "I'd like to know where he expects we'll find a doctor."

Keith said nothing, but followed the girl into the shanty and to the side of her wounded parent.

CHAPTER XIV.

SEEKING A DOCTOR—A SURPRISE.

"Will you go for a doctor, Keith—"

It was the wounded settler who spoke, while the boy whose name he pronounced stood beside him in the dimly-lighted shanty room.

"I am willing to go," said Keith, "but I am afraid I shall not be able to find my way. To tell you the truth, Mr. Dampers—Nevin and I are lost."

"I know where you are. This is the old camp of Peters & Company," returned the man, hoarsely. "You can follow the logging road, can you not?"

"I think so."

It leads a mile from here to the main road, to Loston Point. Loston Point is a mile from the crossing, to the left, is the Wilder's—"

"Well, indeed!" exclaimed Keith, who had listened the tavern many times, and who was supposed to be a near friend of the proprietor.

"Did Doctor Hanks stops at the tavern; bin, him back with you."

"Trust me for that, Mr. Dampers," said Keith.

"We you go at once, my boy—"

"Because, you see, I am bleeding inwardly and can't last much longer," said Dampers.

Keith walked to the door. June accompanied him. Both of the two stood for a time there in the dim light, without speaking. Keith took the girl by the hand and pressed it reassuring.

"Be very careful, Keith," said she tremulously. "I am afraid you will happen to find I don't know what would become of me."

"Don't worry, June," said the boy, stoutly. "I'll come back inside of two hours, with the doctor. Nevin will remain here and keep everything straight until I get back. Good-by!"

Keith raised her brown hand to his lips, then passed out into the moonlight and hurried away down the wagon road. A choking sensation filled the girl's throat as she walked back to the side of her wounded father.

Nevin, feeling somewhat embarrassed when he found himself the sole defender of the forest cottage, crouched into the outer air, and paced up and down before the shanty like a soldier on sentry duty. Keith would not have left the latter under such different circumstances. Wounded unto death, it was plain that he would offer no utterance to a falsehood. The boy had no valuable time in making the road, although the moonlight was an aid that could have been ill dispensed with.

Slowly and wearily the boy pursued his way. His brain was somewhat confused from the effects of fatigue, loss of sleep and long fasting, yet he made no mistakes, and at the end of an hour he stepped out into a well-beaten road which crossed the one he had been traveling at right angles.

Keith knew in his case and heart the boy, joyfully. "I know pretty nearly my bearings now. It is only half a mile to Wilder's tavern. I wonder if I shall find any of them up."

He knew now that Terry Dampers had directed him aright, and he pursued his way down the broad, sandy roadway with a feeling of hopeful elation. It did not require many minutes for the tavern to come in sight of the roadside inn. To his joy a light glowed in the window, and directly a moment as a strains of music floated out on the evening air.

"They're having a dance," he said, "I shall find them all up, which I count as great luck indeed."

The boy hastened forward, pausing again at the window to look in. A pleasant porch which ran the length of the tavern front. The outside was so dark so that the boy had a view of the interior. He saw that several men were lounging and smoking in the barroom. The faces were all strange to him, though one and all seemed familiar, proceeded from another room, telling of the ball at full swing therein.

"Is Mr. Wilder in?" asked Keith

"I am Mr. Wilder," said a short, round individual, who now rose from a chair and came forward. "What can I do for you, my boy?"

I wish to see Doctor Hanks."

I reckon you can't see him just now."

"Isn't he here?"

"No. He went up the river this morning and hasn't got back yet."

"When will he return?"

"That I can't say. Some big man was quite sick, and I suppose the doctor'll stay till he gets better—or dies. What's the trouble?"

"A man met with an accident," said Keith. "Who is it?"

"Terry Dampers."

"What, the Clam Creek squatter? What's happened to him?" cried the rotund tavern-keeper, evincing the deepest interest.

"He was accidentally shot."

"Is he badly hurt?"

"I fear so, sir."

"It's too bad the doctor isn't here. I don't know what you'll do. It's a long ways over to Dampers' place. Hanks may return by morning, though. If he does shall I send him over?"

"Yes," said Keith, forgetting that the tavern-keeper did not know that Dampers was lying in a shanty scarcely three miles distant, instead of at his own home on the Clam. While boy and man stood near the centre of the room conversing, Keith glanced over Wilder's shoulder to see a pair of glittering eyes fixed on his face. Then for the first time the boy realized that one of the inmates of the tavern barroom was not wholly a stranger to him.

The owner of the keen eyes was Dud Bangs, whom Keith had left for dead in the act of knocking over at the time he rescued June and Nevin from a perilous position the previous day. Was he recognized in turn? Of the two Keith believed that this man Bangs was the least of a villain. He was the only one of the trio who had been averse to shedding blood, and Keith feared him less and respected him more on this account.

The man seemed to have fully recovered from the effects of the blow he had given him the previous day. He had tossed aside a cheap cigar he had been smoking to his feet, and was addressing the boy and landlord.

"So Terry Dampers has got a bullet inter him, has he?" he chuckled the fellow, with a grimace. "Is him a-goin' to die, lad?"

I am afraid he will," said Keith.

"Where is he?"

The question query took Keith unawares.

"Not far away—about three miles," he said, after a moment's thought, and quickly decided that it was not best to give any further information to this man who was in all probability a member of the gang in the manufacture of spurious money. Walking to the corner Keith deposited his rifle and then sat down near it, on a rickety chair. The eyes of Bangs were riveted on the weapon.

Keith wondered if he recognized the rifle as the one he had appropriated on the previous day. The lad became unnerved and trembled. But the moment Bangs advanced and spoke again, seeming determined to be part of with exciting language

"About where is the old man, boy?"

"The old man?" Keith pretended not to understand.

"I mean old Dampers," of course. Where is he now?"

"In the woods, badly wounded. I can't tell any more. I shall stop here and await the coming of Doctor Hanks."

"That's right sonny, mind boy, good boy you be."

Bangs turned on his heel, stepped to the bar and called for whisky. He invited to Keith to come in to share his potations. Of course the lad declined and Bangs tossed the liquor down his throat, then drew a bright silver dollar in payment. On receiving the change he turned about and presented a word quitted the room. Mr. Wilder was turning the dollar, a brand new piece, over in his hand. Then Keith stepped up and asked to see it.

"It looks like it was right from the mint," chuckled the landlord.

"It is right from there a great while, depend on that," said Keith.

The tavern-keeper was called away before

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the boy could comment further, by the arrival of three men on horseback. Keith turned away from examining the new dollar at hearing a familiar voice in the doorway. The three new arrivals were just entering the room.

Keith uttered a cry of glad astonishment as he recognised in the foremost of the trio his own father!

CHAPTER XV.
OLD ENEMIES MEET.

"Keith!" exclaimed Mr. Kimberly, crossing the floor with outstretched hands, a look of relief flooding his face. "Where in the world have you been since day before yesterday? I've had half the town out searching for you. Where is Nevin Tetham? His parents are nearly wild about him."

One question at a time, father," laughed

"This is your child, Jerome Kimberly, your lost Pearl."

the stout boy, his heart leaping with joy at the sight of loved parents face once more. "Nevin is safe. We have been lost in the woods and have had the greatest lot of adventures. I think we have discovered a den of counterfeiters as well."

"Counterfeiters!" exclaimed the millowner. "Why, those gentlemen here are looking for such chaps, and will be glad of any information you can give them."

The men who accompanied Mr. Kimberly proved to be government detectives, who had been sent out for the express purpose of ferreting out a gang of bogus moneycoiners which had been located somewhere in the north woods.

"I think I know where one gang is at any rate," said Keith. "One of the fellows left here just before you entered. Here is a dollar he paid over the bar to Mr. Tolderly maybe that is bad."

Keith turned the dollar over to one of the keen-eyed men who accompanied his father.

"It is bogus!" said the detective the moment it touched his velvet fingers. "You say this fellow was here only a short time since——"

"Yes, he went out not ten minutes since."

"Do you think he knew of our presence and took alarm?" asked one of the detectives.

"I don't see how he could," returned Keith. "His name is Dud Bangs—perhaps you know him?"

"He's one of them," exclaimed the detective, turning to consult his companion. Mr. Kimberly drew his son aside and from his lips learned the whole story of the two boys' adventures in the woods.

"This man Dampers is a great villain," said the mill-owner, when his son had concluded his account.

"Yes, that is why he changed his name, I suppose."

"Has another name?"

"I think his right name is Richard Barstow."

"Richard Barstow?" Mr. Kimberly turned upon his son, white to the lips, and trembling with emotion. "What reason have you for such a belief, my son?"

When the boy gave his reasons the millowner's excitement increased. He expressed himself as anxious to go at once to the cabin of the wounded counterfeiter. A consultation was held, the landlord being a party to it. He agreed to furnish a conveyance for the party to visit the shanty. Keith, who was mindful of his long fasting, insisted on something to eat for himself and a basket of food for his friends.

After this provision was compiled with, the three men and Keith set out to visit the shanty in the woods, taking passage in a light wagon drawn by a single stout horse. The party experienced considerable difficulty, after quitting the main thoroughfare, in keeping the ill-defined logging road. Trees had fallen in all directions across the way, compelling a detour, in which much time was lost. The shanty was reached at length, however, and Nevin met them at the door.

"How is he?" asked Keith.

"Very bad. Have you fetched a doctor?"

"No. He will come later."

Mr. Kimberly exchanged greetings with his son's friend, then followed him into the shanty, which was but dimly illuminated by the fire on the hearth. Jim sat on the box, looking very glum indeed, when the party entered. She had been weeping, and her cheeks were still moist with tears.

She paid little heed to the newcomers, brooding too deeply on the subject of her parent's wound to care for her surroundings. Dampers turned his face toward the door as the party entered. His deepset eyes seemed to take a fierce gleam into their depths when the form of Mr. Kimberly met their gaze. The mill-owner bent low and peered sharply into the face of the wounded counterfeiter. He seemed to be carefully studying every lineament of that dark face.

A quick spasm of pain convulsed the face of Kimberly. He caught his breath with a sharp sound, then dropped upon one knee, continuing to gaze at the prostrate and helpless man.

"Richard Barstow at last—at last!" uttered the mill-owner hoarsely.

The wounded man closed his eyes and groaned.

"You are in my power at last, Richard," pursued Kimberly. "I have never ceased to look for you, despite all my woes. I came west thinking to find you, and my efforts have been blessed, thanks to my boy Keith and Neighbor Tetham's son. I shall see that you are punished for the cruel murder of my baby girl. You have no one to say in defense of your crime, Richard? Speak quickly, before I forget myself and take the law into my own hands."

"No need of that, Jerome. I shall die anyway, thanks to your neighbor's son and yours. Kill me now if you like."

A gurgling sound interrupted the words. Keith and the rest, all save June, were startled by the sound. Even the poor wound. Keith realised that in the wounded settler Neighbor Tetham had found a enemy, one who had wronged him most bitterly in the past. The mystery surrounding Dampers was, the boy believed, about to be cleared up.

"You refuse to say anything——"

"No," the wounded man uttered the wounded man, turning over his sound shoulder, framing with the motion of the words. "You know why I robbed you of little Pearl. You robbed me of my power and turned her over to my bitter enemy. I vowed then to get even, Jerome. Although you, as my half brother, have succeeded even in bargaining me, and were doubtless paid for it, I have been revenged daily by stealing little Pearl, the best loved of your household. You found the cruel note I left pinned to the babe's hat and cloak on the river bank, I suppose?"

"Yes. The note said that little Pearl's body lay beneath the water, weighted down with iron. We dragged the river for miles in a fruitless search. My poor wife was ill for weeks afterward, and she has never fully recovered from that terrible blow. Can you wonder that I hated you after that, Richard Barstow?"

"Perhaps not, but one good turn deserves another. You robbed me——"

"I did nothing of the kind," the other interrupted. "You plotted to keep your half-brother out of his inheritance. All that I did was to restore him that which was lawfully and morally his. I have never repented doing that. You were a bad man then, and it seems that time has not softened your heart. Had you not changed your name I might have found you sooner. I am not surprised to learn that you are engaged in an unlawful calling. I shall take pleasure in turning you over to these gentlemen here, who are officers of the law."

"You can prove nothing against me."

"I can prove enough to hang you if you don't die of this wound," said the millowner, sternly.

"You forget that there's no hanging in Michigan," said a sullen laugh accompanied the words.

"True, but they hang murderers in the state where your crime was committed. The gallows alone shall satisfy the cruel murder of my innocent babe!"

Jerome Kimberly spoke with intense feeling. The interval of time had failed to soften his heart toward the destroyer of his child. His face remained white and stern during the interview. With his enemy prostrate and helpless he seemed only too anxious to use his advantage toward securing his punishment.

"What if the babe was not murdered, Jerome?"

"I cannot suppose anything of the kind."

"Wait a moment. Not too fast," the wounded man articulated with apparent difficulty. "If you hadn't been such a rank idiot, Jerome Kimberly, you'd have known after dragging the river in vain that the note I pinned to the babe's cloak was a lie, penned on purpose to harrow your soul and that of your aristocratic wife."

"What are you telling me?"

"I'm telling you that Baby Pearl wasn't drowned."

"Pearl not drowned? Then what became of her? Speak quickly, Richard; do not keep me in suspense another moment. If Pearl was not drowned, what fate befell her?" cried the old settler, in agonised suspense.

"I adopted her as my own, Jerome. She has been reared in the woods, and has never known any father but me. Although ignorant of school and town, she is yet smart by nature, and, if you will agree not to prosecute me for her kidnapping you may have her for aught I care."

"Return my child and she past shall be forgive," said Kimberly, hoarsely, his strong frame trembling with emotion.

"June," called the wounded man, "come here."

The girl rose from the box and came to the side of the kneeling mill-owner.

CHAPTER XVI.
A HAPPY FINALE.

"This is your child, Jerome Kimberly — your lost Pearl."

The mill-owner saw before him a thin, dark child of a dozen years. Her eyes looked into his with mingled curiosity and timidity. She did not shrink from his gaze, however, but stood quite still and permitted him to look her over.

"Do you doubt me, Jerome? If so, examine her left elbow. You have not forgotten the frightful burn Pearl got one time——the scar is even yet visible."

But Jerome Kimberly did not look where he was bidden for proof of what the wounded money-maker was telling him. He rose to his feet instead, and led the little girl to the fire, where every lineament of her dark young face was plainly seen by the ruddy glow. He regarded her long and earnestly, then said, in low, tense tones:

"It is indeed Pearl! She has her mother's face."

He placed a protecting arm about the slender form and drew it closely to his heart, murmuring:

"Heaven is good to me, very kind, indeed, to give me back my child after all these long years, my own precious baby Pearl!"

The others present looked on and wondered. Keith was dumbfounded. This, then was the secret of the bitter enmity between Terry Dampers and his father. This explained the excitement exhibited by the Clam Creek settler when he heard Keith's name that night at the cabin, and it accounted also for his murderous attempt upon Nevin and himself.

"Yes, I will go with you," said June, when questioned later by the mill-owner. "They treat and mistreat me at home."

A dark look visited the face of Kimberly as this, the kindly bestowed on the wounded man once more and the two talked long and earnestly.

"I am willing to make a clean breast of it now," avowed Dampers. "Whether I live or die it matters not: I have had my revenge upon you in any event, Jerome."

"Indeed you have," groaned the listener.

"I have been in the queer tobacco business for two years. There are four of us—Hanga, Torchet and another beside myself. You will find the whole outfit in the cellar of the house on Swamp island."

The voice of the wounded man was growing rapidly weak and husky. His strength was apparently spent, and from the haggard appearance of his face those about him believed he would soon pass from earth.

"One moment!" exclaimed one of the detectives, as Mr. Kimberly turned aside to look after little June—his baby Pearl now.

"You have not named the fourth man of your gang, Terry Dampers."

"—I thought I named them all."

"Yourself, Hangs, Torchet, and——"

"And Jake Wilder, the lumber-jumper."

"I thought so!" ejaculated the detective, with a satisfied smile.

The counterfeiters of Swamp island were successfully trapped. Richard Barstow, alias Terry Dampers, lived to appear as a witness for the state, and the quartet were sentenced to the penitentiary for a long term of years.

When at length the abductor of little Pearl had come out of prison he called at the home of the Kimberlys and humbly begged to be forgiven for his one act which had so darkened the lives of the mill-owner and his wife. After that Barstow disappeared and was never again seen by those he had so bitterly wronged.

It seems hardly necessary to speak of the great happiness that came to the Kimberlys with the return to their arms of Baby Pearl. Keith's blueberry expedition had been the means of solving a deep mystery, and the return of little June to a happy home, where her beatings and ill-treatment were of the past.

She was at once sent to school, and Keith was proud ere long of the rapid progress his sister made in her studies. Nevin Tetham is still a good friend of the Kimberleys and of Pearl in particular. He has filled out wonderfully during the few years, has, in fact, become quite a handsome young man, with scarcely a trace of his boyish awkwardness remaining.

Pearl, with added years, has become a young woman of grace and beauty. She and the boys often speak of that time of trial in the woods, congratulating themselves that it has long since become as a dream.

At the present writing Keith is manager of his father's mill. Nevin Tetham is absent at college, but not forgotten, as once

(Continued on page fourteen.)

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DR. PIERCE SUES W. C. T. U. PEOPLE.

Says That His Medicines Do Not Contain Alcohol

OPIUM, NOR OTHER NARCOTICS

Statements Were Made by Certain Temperance People Denying This.

ASSERTIONS WERE ANNOYING.

More Than That, the Doctor Says, They Hurt His Business and He Will Try to Recover Damages.

(From the Buffalo Evening Times.)

The suits recently instituted by the World's Dispensary Medical Association, of this city, against certain propagandists of the W. C. T. U., and others, had their origin in a conflict of statement which was at once annoying to Dr. Pierce, the president of the above Association, personally, and injurious to his business interests. For some time the advertisements of Dr. Pierce' Favorite Prescription and "Golden Medical Discovery" have laid great stress upon the fact that these medicines contain no alcohol, and are absolutely free from opium, cocaine, and all other narcotics. It is generally known that most put-up medicines contain a large quantity of alcohol, and that in other cases liberal use is made of opium, cocaine, or other narcotics, the continual use of which is disastrous to body and mind. It was supposed, therefore, that temperance leaders, especially the women, would recognize the fact that the non-alcoholic and non-narcotic character of Dr. Pierce's medicines gave them a prior claim to the attention of all those engaged in fighting the use of alcohol. But instead of this, certain leading temperance women sent out pamphlets in which they assumed to give the formulas of Dr. Pierce's medicines, and claimed that they contained both alcohol and opium.

In self-protection and in order to publicly nail this outrageous falsehood, there was only one thing to do—bring suit against the authors of the libelous statements. This the Doctor at once proceeded to do.

THE ETHICAL POINT OF VIEW.

From an ethical point of view the most curious feature of the case is that the statements as to the alcoholic and narcotic ingredients contained in the medicines were made without first making any analysis of the medicines, and were based upon the false formulas published in the interests of parties antagonistic to Dr. Pierce's business. The publishers of these false formulas are also getting their lesson in the law.

The injury to Dr. Pierce's business from the circulation of such statements as were made in the pamphlets above referred to can readily be understood. It was natural that the temperance people to whom these pamphlets were addressed should believe in the statements of their own leaders, and accept the fact that the advertising of Dr. Pierce was flagrantly false. As a matter of fact the falsehood was entirely on the other side, and Dr. Pierce was enabled to support the claims of his advertising by an offer of $1,000 for each and every bottle of the medicine which on analysis showed the presence of alcohol or narcotics.

BIG STAFF OF DOCTORS.

Any one who had acquaintance with Dr. Pierce and the well-known institution, the Invalids' Hotel and Surgical Institute, of which he is chief consulting physician, would have known better than to attribute his advertised statement, even though published formulas seemed to controvert his claims. As one of the largest advertisers in the United States, Dr. Pierce has also a reputation for the utmost exactness of statement. If Dr. Pierce says that he has on nearly a score of associate physicians on his staff, you may be certain that you will find, from eighteen to twenty physicians working with him, the indefinite statement being made because of occasional changes which do not honestly permit him to say "there are always twenty physicians on the staff." If the claim is made on behalf of Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery and "Favorite Prescription," that they contain no alcohol and are free from narcotics it may be depended upon that the statement is exactly true. It is the same in reference to other matters pertaining to the World's Dispensary Medical Association. Nothing is overstated, and Dr. Pierce gives his large success and enormous business as much to his absolute integrity of word and deed, as the power of healing value of his medicines. In a recent interview Dr. Pierce said, with reference to the suits at present being prosecuted: "We are determined to stop the publication of the false formulas of our medicines.

FORMULAS NEVER RIGHT.

"These formulas are never even approximately right, and generally their falsehood extends not merely to the inclusion of alcohol and narcotics, but to non-existents concerning every reputed ingredient of the medicines. A notable example of this falsehood was recently brought to our notice. A physician at the head of an institution, known throughout the United States, publishes a so-called health guide. In this book, among the formulas of other medicines, are given, as I understand, also the formulas of Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery and 'Favorite Prescription.' Not one of the medicinal ingredients named in these false formulas enters into the composition of Dr. Pierce's medicines. There is no excuse for such scoundrelism, and no explanation of it except on the ground that the man has a laboratory at his disposal; he could have had an analysis made if he wanted one. He probably did not want one. A lie was easier than the truth, and a great deal handier for his purpose.

"It would be interesting to know how far the rest of his book may be false also. If the remainder of the information it supplies is as utterly unreliable as these formulas, it will be a case of 'the blind leading the blind' to go into the ditch. As it is, a casual glance at the book recalls that famous remark made concerning another of the brotherhood of 'stuffed prophets': 'The gentleman relies upon his imagination for his facts and upon his memory for his wit.'

"We are going after this kind of man. We are going to show up the unprincipled liars, who lend the name and influence of an honorable profession to give weight to the falsehood which they utter. As it is, we are performing a duty to the public, as well as to ourselves."

Among the Counterfeiters.

(Continued from page thirteen.)

each week, pretty Pearl (June that was) revelves from this fascinating task to letter being the Ann Arbor postmark. Her brother often wrote her about these letters, well knowing that it was through that brave Nevin, who was his faithful chum in times past, will eventually become his brother in fact as well as in name.

(The end.)

AT LAST.

By J. R. T.

My lady's descending the stair,
Wrapped in an opera cloak;
And I, who am waiting below,
With a halo of wonderful hair,
Like a saint whom we mortals invoke.

Though My Lady, descending the stair
In a glory of tulle and of white,
Has often denied me a prayer,
Refused me a sigh, yet I swear
She is 'coming down handsome' tonight!

A NIGHT OF TERROR.

I know you have often wondered why I think so much of my old dog, and always let him have a warm corner by the fireside. Poor fellow! he has been a kindness I can give him, for under Providence he once saved my life.

Fifteen years after John and I were married he lost his work and the doctors said nothing would restore his health but a native air of Leigh. So we sold our shop and stock and came back to farm and sunn cottage property in Leigh. The change was beneficial and in the autumn was as stout and hearty as ever. There was little for him to do here, and he soon began to get discontented. We staid three years in Leigh and then sold our property for $600 more than we paid for it, and went to Ashby, where we now are, and where we have done well.

The day that John came over here to arrange about the sale of the property in Leigh property was paid us. I wanted John to take the money with him, but he thought it would be safer for me to keep it. So I put up in the drawer of an old desk that had belonged to my father, and left it.

After John had left me I began to get very uneasy about the money. It was getting well on into the autumn, and was soon dark at night. Mr. Pierce was always into such a state of alarm that I felt I must not sleep in the house alone. In the afternoon I determined to send for a friend of John's who kept a grocery in the village, and was supposed to be well to do. My husband used often to go and smoke a pipe with him, and he also would come to our house occasionally. He was about the only friend my husband had in Ashby during our stay in Leigh. I sent for him, and in about half an hour he came down to our cottage. I told him about my husband receiving the money, and having to leave home to attend to his business, and of my fear of staying in the house alone, and asked him if he would be kind enough to come and sit with me till morning.

He laughed and said: "Why, Missus, what have you to be afraid of? There is not nobody in the village knows aught about your husband having money, and if they did, I don't think there's anybody would hurt you." He went on to say that he would have been glad to come before, but he had got some bills to make out during the night, and must get up in the market early in the morning; but as he could not refuse to come, he would bring his big dog and leave it during the night, and that it would be as great a protection to me as the best man in the county.

About dusk, just as I was having my tea, my husband's friend arrived with the dog, the same old fellow who is lying so quietly at my feet. He came, not an old dog then, for it's nearly ten years since that night. He was a big, strong, active cur-dog-per, "you look all up safe, and Ned will take care of you. I will come and fetch him when I come back from market in the morrow." Telling the dog to lie down, and wishing me good-night, our friend left me. I fastened up the doors and windows. I was not fond of dogs then, and I was almost as frightened at being left in the house with that great, rough dog as I had been at the thought of being alone.

Presently Ned left his corner and came up to me wagging his bushy tail, and we soon became friends. By 10 o'clock I felt quite brave, having the dog by my side. I had made up my mind at first to sit up all night, but I began to think how foolish I was, and after giving Ned a good supper, I went to bed, leaving the dog downstairs.

I never knew how long I slept that night. My sleep was disturbed with all kinds of frightful dreams, and at last I awoke with a start. I listened a minute, and then I heard a low growl from the dog. This was followed by a peculiar grating noise, like the sound from a file or saw, the dog still keeping up his low growl. I felt sure that some one was trying to get into the house either through the back door or the window. My terror was so great that I could not stir or speak.

Whilst lying in an agony of suspense, I thought I heard a voice whisper, "Lie down, Ned." In another instant there was the noise of broken glass, and the sound of a man jumping on to the floor. I heard the dog bound forward. A moment afterwards there was a frightful struggle accompanied with low curses of a deep voice, and then the sound like the unsetting of a table. The struggle continued for what to me appeared hours, then all was silent, except a low moaning, which gradually grew fainter and fainter, until all was still.

Never shall I forget the agony of that fearful night. At last the day dawn broke, but it was broad daylight before I dared venture out of bed. I shouted from my bed room window until I drew the attention of some men who were working in the fields near by. They came at once to answer to my cries, and when I heard them in the house I found courage enough to go down stairs.

There, by the door, was the man-gled body of the store keeper, who had evidently met his own dog in his attempt to enter the house. No doubt he thought that the dog would recognize him and that he would be able to quiet him. To avoid detection he might possibly have murdered me.

Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup for Children teething, softens the gums, reduces inflammation, allays pain, cures wind colic. 25 cents a bottle.

How to Avoid Enoui.

To avoid ennui we must shun idleness as our worst enemy; we must cultivate all our faculties; we must avoid living a narrow and circumscribed life; we must learn how to adapt ourselves to circumstances and conditions, to take pleasure in many different things, to keep ourselves in touch with different kinds of people, that we may understand and sympathize with each in turn, and we must also learn to be often our own good and pleasant companion. Variety is much more than the spice of life: it is the means of making it fuller, richer, happier, and more valuable.

Discovered by a Woman.

I have discovered a positive cure for all female diseases and the piles. It never fails to cure the worst form any cancer of in either sex, or any of the ailments peculiar to women, such as leucorrhœa, displacements, ulceration, prolapsus, etc. I will gladly send a free box of the remedy to every sufferer. Address

Mrs. C. B. Miller, Box 76, Kokomo, Ind.

A FAREWELL.

By Harriet Monroe.

Good-by; nay, do not grieve that it is over—
The perfect hour
That the winged joy, sweet honey-loving rover
Wins from the flower.

Grieve not; it is the law. Love will be dying—
Yea, love and all.
Glad was the living, blessed be the dying!
Let the leaves fall.

Boy's Secret Society—Membership Free.

Any boy can join the C. M. A. free. It is the great original and only secret society for boys under 21 years of age. It has grips, signs, passwords, badges, secret emblems and ceremonies. Every boy should join. The Prize Paper tells all about it. Send your name and address plainly written with your religion and politics. Number of members everywhere. Boys, if you are a member, or if you are a member by certain signs, etc. Send your name and address and number of secret boys you think would like to join. Enclose stamp. Address THE STAR, 321 Marion Street, Scranton, Pa.

A Lucky Man.

"My husband has a great advantage over most men."

"Indeed?"

"He walks in his sleep."

"I don't see what advantage that can be to a person."

"Why, he can carry the baby all night long and still get his natural rest."

Evidently a Mistake.

"Funston says he hasn't gall enough to ask for the kind of a political office he would be willing to accept."

"Then the report must have been wrong."

"What report?"

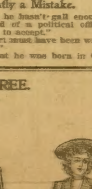
"The report that he was born in Ohio."

BEAUTIFUL PATTERNS FREE.

LADIES' WRAPPER WITH SHIRT WAIST YOKE AND SLEEVES, NO. 7688.

GIRLS' COSTUME, NO. 7698.

LADIES' SHIRT WAIST.—To be made with Bias or Straight Frontsand Sleeves with or without the Linings. Yoke Facing, No. 7684.



BOY'S DRESS, NO. 7694.

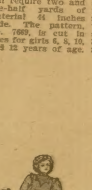
To make this wrapper for a lady of medium size will require 7 yards of material 30 inches wide. The pattern, No. 7688, is cut in sizes for a 32, 36, 38, 40 and 42-inch bust measure.

To make this costume for a girl of five in the medium size will require nine yards of material, one-half yard of which is 36 inches wide. The pattern, No. 7698, is cut in sizes for a 32, 36, 38, 40 and 42-inch bust measure.

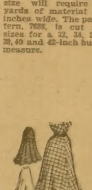
To make this waist for a lady of medium size will require 2¼ yards of material 36 inches wide. The pattern, No. 7684, is cut in sizes for a 32, 34, 36, 38, 40 and 42-inch bust measure.

To make this dress for a boy 7 years of age will require 4 yards of material 27 inches wide. The pattern, No. 7694, is cut in sizes for 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 and 14 years of age.

GIRLS' SHIRT WAIST WITH STANDING SAILOR COLLAR AND TIE WHICH MAY BE OMITTED, NO. 7696.



CHILD'S DRESS WITH EMPIRE EFFECT, NO. 7697.

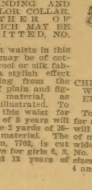


LADIES' SACQUE NIGHT GOWN WITH PLAITED POINTED YOKE, NO. 7683.

Shirt waists in this style may be of cotton, wool or silk fabrics, or novelties resulting from the use of plain and figured material, as preferred. To make this waist for a lady of medium size will require 3 yards of 36-inch material. The pattern, No. 7696, is cut in sizes for girls 6, 8, 10, 12 and 14 years of age.

To make this dress for a child of 4 years of age will require 5 yards of 27-inch material. The pattern, No. 7697, is cut in sizes for girls 2, 3 and 4 years of age.

Gowns in this style made of striped or figured French flannel or fancy percalette are desirable for traveling or general wear. To make this gown for a lady of medium size will require 6 yards of material 32 inches wide. The pattern, No. 7683, is cut in sizes for a 32, 34, 36, 38, 40 and 42-inch bust measure.



LADIES' CIRCULAR SKIRT, WITH OR WITHOUT CENTRE SEAM, NO. 7633.

To make this skirt for a lady of medium size will require 5 yards of material 36 inches wide. The pattern, No. 7633, is cut in sizes for a 22, 24, 26, 28, 30 and 32-inch waist measure.

An Unparalleled Offer.

The patterns shown above are furnished us by one of the best, if not the best, pattern manufacturers in New York. They comprise the very latest styles, and are unequaled for accuracy in fit, simplicity in use, and are most economical of material. They sell from the stores from twenty-five to fifty cents each. Full instructions are printed on every pattern. Three months' subscription to the CHICAGO LEDGER for 25 cents and TWO of the above patterns FREE. Six months' subscription to the CHICAGO LEDGER for 50 cents and FIVE of these patterns FREE. This offer is without an equal. If you are wise you will take advantage of it at once. Give the numbers of the patterns and bust measure desired. Enclose money and address.

PATTERN DEPARTMENT, CHICAGO LEDGER, CHICAGO, ILL.

The Pirate's Daughter.

(Continued from page three.)

for you are liable to be challenged if you are a poor marksman."

"Is duelling allowed?"

"Yes. It cannot be prevented. Many men have been killed by ducks that are disgraceful. But they all fear a dead shot, and he is not so apt to be challenged."

"What is the chief cause of the duelling?" asked Ravenwood.

"The women. Men fall out over their wives and sweethearts, and fight each other, which is another cause."

"I would think Bolidar would banish both from the island."

The youth shaking his head, said:

"He would hardly dare do that. There would be a revolt, and he would have a civil war on the island."

Ravenwood was silent for several minutes. The two were sitting on a moss-covered stone, their eyes fixed on the ground. At last he said:

"Bertl, though I have joined these pirates, I will tell you, in confidence, I have not given up the hope of escape."

"And will you go with you?" he asked, grasping Ravenwood's hand in both his own, and fixing his eyes to the ground at his feet.

The captain fixed his eyes upon the earnest, appealing face of the beautiful boy and said:

"Bertl, after all you have done for me, and been to me, I could not think of leaving without you. My dear little brother, don't you know I would risk my life for you as you have for me. Can we not both go together?"

"Yes, yes!"

"And will you not go with me?"

"All over the world. Oh, senor, I will never, never leave your side. I—I love you more than man was ever loved before. I would die for you. Nobody only knows how willingly I would lay my life down for you."

"I doubt you not, Bertl, sincerity and earnestness you have always professed, and been backed by the most faithful support."

"Then we will go, senor?"

"When and how?"

"Listen and I will tell you. Across that mountain range on the north a distance of four or five miles, a path leads through the mangroves, to another narrow bay, too narrow and too shallow for a large vessel to enter, even the lighter craft as the Sea Gull. But there is a large boat lying there, and a small sword and a sail. To make it across some night we can board the boat and sail out with the tide to sea."

"It is provided with sail, chart, and compass?"

"It has all those aboard and a snug little cabin up under the stern with three bunks in it, and a pilot house."

"We must provision and water it, for we may be many days at sea."

"Yes, we can look after that."

"And you will go with me, Bertl?"

"Happy will I be to escape these monsters, senor, to go with you and be with you forever."

The captain was bringing the youth gradually to the point nearest his heart, and said:

"Bertl, don't you think we can take with us that poor captive—the pretty young woman, who is so very amiable—"

Bertl started up quickly, his eyes flashing with a strange, mysterious fire, and cried:

"No, no, don't think of that!" He gnashed his teeth with a strange fury and clutched the dagger at his girdle. "Don't think of that," he repeated. "The thought of it will drive me to her ruin." Then his voice sinking to a whisper, he gasped, "Don't dream of it. You encompass her death."

CHAPTER VI.

"AM I NOT AS BEAUTIFUL AS SHE?"

The strange conduct of Bertl for a long time completely upset all the plans of Luke Ravenwood. The boy seemed to hate the fair captive, and no persuasion would induce him to raise a hand for her rescue.

Ravenwood was in a peculiar situation. He could not himself escape without the aid of the youth; he was determined never to leave the island without Eleanor, and yet no amount of persuasion could induce the boy pirate to consent to her release.

They returned to the village just as the sun was setting, and found the inhabitants all in a little flutter of excitement over the announcement that the chief would soon put to sea on one of his cruises. There was always a rivalry among the buccaneers for a position on the schooner when she sailed on one of her depredating voyages.

The men who remained at home, of course, received some shares of the profits, but the largest dividends were paid to those who went on board.

A system of drawing lots was arranged, and the new recruit was told he would have an opportunity to draw.

"How soon would the schooner sail?" he asked, anxiously.

"Within one week," was the answer.

Bertl, the bear, leaned against the wall. That night he and Bertl, in the deep recesses of the cavern, discussed the plans of escape.

"Tomorrow I will go to draw a lot and if I fail to draw to go the voyage we must leave before the schooner sails. It will be death and ruin to go with the Sea Gull."

"I know it, senor. If you draw we will set at once."

Next day the drawing came off and Luke Ravenwood, a new recruit, was one of the crew.

To congratulate you," said Bolidar, who was at his side. "You will make one of the crew for the voyage. There is no transfer, now you have drawn. Must go?"

Many battle-scarred, gray-haired pirates gathered about the unfortunate sea captain to congratulate him while his heart was heavy as lead.

Meanwhile he was told he could go where he pleased, so that on the morning of the twenty-fourth, one week off, he reported on board the Sea Gull. When night came Bertl led him aside and told him that they must commence loading the provisions on the boat at once. There were several empty breakers on it, which they could fill from the mountain stream, but they must carry provision across the mountains. Consequently they each took a bag of sea biscuit and dried meat from the great commissary stores that night and started along the narrow mountain trail.

By the skill and knowledge of Bertl they avoided all guards and a single day was long, the path steep and rugged, but both were young and strong and sure-footed. They clambered over the mountain top, and descended into a valley.

The mood had changed in the meanwhile and was throwing a silvery gleam over the landscape. A narrow strip of water could be seen and a dark thing at the side next them, he was told, was a boat.

They had to halt frequently to rest and when they were within a few hundred paces of the boat, Bertl bade him stop and wait until he went nearer to learn if any of the buccaneers were lingering near by.

He was gone half an hour and came back with the information that none had been near the boat for several days.

They then hastened to store away the stores they had brought with them, and then while Bertl rowed Ravenwood brought water in the buckets and filled the breakers. There was a large spring of fresh water near, and they filled all the water casks aboard, enough to supply half a dozen persons for a long voyage.

Such fruits as dried figs and dates were procured in abundance, as well as many cocoanuts and other tropical fruits, including a bushel of sweet oranges and several bunches of bananas.

Bertl wished to go with him next night, but Ravenwood, insisted on remaining alone on him staying at the village, and he declared that a large amount of provision be carried across the mountain to the boat that night, and a few more casks filled with good quantity of ammunition. He carried two extra cutlasses, all of which he hid in the cabin.

The reader must not suppose that Luke had for a moment forgotten the one he was rescuing Eleanor. He had never seen her from the time he left the floor of the harbor prison room, but he knew that she was still there, and by no means neglected in securing the services of the youth.

By some means he hoped to enlist his sympathies in favor of the young woman, and thus save her.

At one time he was tempted to tell him all, to admit that he was her lover, that they had been betrothed, but as soon as he knew having found her, would be like tearing his heart from his breast.

But he refrained, first for fear that the youth might himself be in love with her, and then for the reason that a confession of love actually hated her.

Not that he feared they were alone in the elegantly furnished subterranean apartments of Bertl, for Eleanor, a privileged person on the island. He had insisted on Luke reclining on the luxurious sofa, he sat on a low ottoman at his side, holding both his hands and gazing fondly and lovingly up into his face.

"I want to talk with you very earnestly tonight, Bertl," he said. "Will you not incarnate my heart."

"Luke, Luke, you know I love you. Prince Arthur never loved the cruel Herbert more than I love you who dandles my love, to him will I prove it."

"I am going to prove it tonight, Bertl." "How?"

He started to his feet as he spoke, clasped both hands over his throbbing bosom, while his breath came hot and quick.

"How? What is the trial?" he gasped.

"I cannot go, Bertl, and leave the poor young lady in captivity. She is my friend, my sister, my love, her parents and could I ever meet her father and say that I left—"

"Luke, Luke, you shall not, not that!" cried Bertl, his eyes flashing fire and his breath drawing hard. "You love her—how me you do not love her?"

The question put so abruptly for a moment stunned him.

He sought to evade it by asking one in return.

"Bertl, do you love her?"

"Love her!" The handsome face clouded and disfigured with a frown. No! I hate her!"

His action was more like that of a spoiled child.

Then a new resolution seemed to possess Bertl's soul and he said:

"I must tell you all. You shall know all. I see you love her. Stay here until I will tell you. I will not be long. Move not."

Thunderstruck, Luke started up, sitting on the cot while he disappared through an opening. Then he heard a door shut softly, the curtains were drawn aside, and there stood the form of a woman, and never the most beautiful woman in the world was arrayed in scarcer or more gorgeous raiment. Luke started up in amazement, while an exclamation of surprise escaped his lips.

"Am I not beautiful as she?"

It was Bertl's silvery voice.

"Bertl! Mr. Bertl!"

"Not Bertl, senor Bertl, for I have assumed the garb of my true sex. Not Bertl, senor, but the daughter of the Sea King. Am I not beautiful as she?"

Dumbfounded he dropped back on the couch and gazed at her.

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FOR YOUTHFUL EYES.

A BAD COLD.

By Felix Leigh.

Thomas the Tabb, with whiskers long,
Went hunting mice when the draught blew strong.
He sat him down on the bare stone floor,
And the draught blew under the kitchen door.

He sat him down by a mouse's hole,
And he watched for three long hours—poor soul!
The draught blew sharp and the draught blew shrill,
But Thomas the Tabb he sat there still.

Those three long hours they were scarcely past,
When the mouse peeped out—at last, at last!

"In another moment you will be seized,"
Chuckled Thomas the Tabb, and then he—sneezed!

Thomas the Tabb, as we proceed
To press, is a sorrowful invalid;
And the mouse observed to her youngsters bold,
"But he did catch something—he caught a cold!"

UP TO DATE.

"You're way behind the times. Why don't you use the drop handle bar?"

Kept the Baby Quiet.

The woman in the lower flat met her at the door of the building, and a minute later the woman who had been out to make a few calls rushed upstairs to her own apartments.

"Nothing, my dear," replied her husband, as he looked up at her in surprise. He was on his hands and knees playing horse with the 4-year-old, while the baby sat in the corner, gurgling and laughing.

"Nothing!" she exclaimed. "Nothing! Do you know that you have knocked a square yard of the plastering from the ceiling of the room below this one?"

"Have I, my dear?" he asked, meekly.

"Have you?" she cried. "Of course you have. Further than that, you upset a water pitcher or something and a good deal of the paper downstairs is ruined."

"Did I, my dear?"

"Yes, you did," she asserted, "and the neighbors tell me that the racket here has been simply awful; and the worst of it is that you have been responsible."

"I?"

"Yes, you. You needn't try to get out of it. They recognized your voice. They could hear you clear to the corner yelling 'Whoa!' and 'Get up!' and all that sort of nonsense, and the people downstairs say that you were the one who was galloping up and down the room and jumping over the chairs. They could tell by the way it jarred the house. The children couldn't possibly have made such a racket. What in the world have you been trying to do?"

"My dear," he returned, meekly, "do you remember what you said to me when you went out?"

"Distinctly," she replied. "I told you above all things to keep the baby quiet, for there was somebody sick downstairs."

"Well," he said, with the air of a much injured man, "I have kept the baby quiet in the only way possible to me."

How the Grocery Man Made Out.

It will be remembered that last Sunday we left the two farmers and the perplexed grocer in a position where the grocer was vainly endeavoring to measure out four gallons with three measures of eight gallons, five gallons and three gallons each. It took the grocer some little time to find a way that would be correct and not take too long a time.

As was suggested, he first filled the eight gallon can, that being the exact quantity necessary to make the complete measures of four gallons each for both the farmers.

Were you able to do it? It is a nice little problem, and a simple one when you know it. After considerable thought, our grocery-man proceeded as follows, and you must watch his method closely to be sure that there is no deception:

He filled the eight gallon can first, and then filled the five gallon can out of the eight gallon can, leaving three gallons in the eight gallon can. He next filled the three gallon can out of the five gallon can, leaving two gallons in the five gallon can. Then, after pouring the three gallons just put into the smallest can back into the eight gallon can he two gallons still left in the five gallon can were poured into the three gallon can making then two gallons in the can, the three gallon can and six gallons in the eight gallon can.

After filling the five gallon can from the eight, leaving one gallon in the eight gallon can, the two gallon can, which already contains two gallons, is filled from the five gallon can, taking one gallon out and leaving the required four gallons. By pouring the three gallons then into the eight gallon can, which has one gallon in it, the two portions of four gallons each are obtained. You can do this for yourself with quart measures and see how prettily it works out.

Has Another Ant to Wash Him.

The ants have more curious customs than almost any of the insects, and there is one kind that is clean an a cat. They take turns cleaning each other. First one lays down, and the other starts by washing its face, from there going over the whole body. The one that is being cleaned seems to enjoy it as much as a dog having his head scratched. It lies with all its limbs sprawled out, rolls over on its side and even on its back in mild enjoyment.

Street Car Strategy.

"You told the conductor Willie was under 5?"

"Hush! That's a new scheme I've discovered."

"Tell me the secret."

"Well, you see, 5 is the number in Willie's hat."

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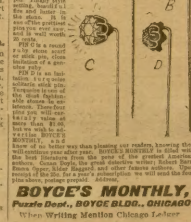

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